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BLIND CHILDREN

by

Augusto Romagnoli

Translated from the
Italian
by

Jean Wallace Miller

[Ragazzi Ciechi, 1924]

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English translation

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I

INTRODUCTION

Almost twenty years have passed since the appearance of the other volume on the blind, which revealed Romagnoli as a writer. The man who was a patient apostle from 1906 to 1924 has developed his ideas. It was contrary to his intelligence to work with abstract programs, to his conscience as an educator to theorize about the instruction of the blind, while there persisted in regard to them among most people a false state of mind which made broader provision for them impossible and tended to keep the blind in their spiritual prison. Blindness impoverishes life only because the child suffering from this privation - of which he knows nothing - is not helped to gain faith in himself and to live on equal terms with the sighted. Therefore he quickly loses courage through the idea which comes unexpectedly, stealthy as phthisis, of his own impotence, confirmed by others with a thousand acts of unenlightened pity.

Romagnoli therefore preferred propaganda among the sighted to change their arbitrary convictions, and the example of a new education to give teachers of the blind the desire for new experience. In 1912 he succeeded in giving physical education ^{to} ~~of~~ the blind in one of the old institutions. This training is the foundation of self-confidence, because, while it increases vitality, it gives the blind person his greatest spiritual treasures: orientation, the discrimination of obstacles, spontaneous exploration of the surrounding world, also the capacity to handle, model, construct, and therefore to create himself his own means of learning. Above all, it makes him acquire the gayety and boldness which call forth from the sighted the right

Alfred Lewis Jones was born blind the youngest of the
other children on the farm. His parents belonged to a village.
The day when a violent storm broke from 1838 has developed
his ideas. It was contrary to his intelligence in those years
without doubt, to his consciousness as he began to develop
from the darkness of the blind. While these passages in
regard to that blind world people - later years of blind years were
hardly possible for that impossible and hard to keep the
blind in their physical world. Although sometimes his
only because the world contains too little wisdom - of which
he knows nothing - he was obliged to find out himself and
to live on equal terms with the sighted. Therefore he wanted
to learn through the last years when physically, steadily
he realized, of his own ignorance, nothing of which with a
knowledge of his own ignorance.
Consequently therefore progress was made in the blind
to change their ability conditions, and the results of a new
question to give knowledge of the blind was found in the new
experience. In this he succeeded in giving himself a new
of the blind in one of the blind. His training as
the knowledge of self-knowledge. Because, while in ignorance
blindly, it gives the blind person his own knowledge
inward: orientation, the knowledge of his own, from
knowledge of the environment, and the knowledge of the world
to health, mental, and therefore to guide himself in
own sense of learning. From all, it seems the world is
every day and because blind will learn from the blind the light

tone of cordiality and confidence toward the blind man and suggest every kind of care to help him without mortifying him, ^{and to} ~~of~~ increase ~~his~~ his independence and with it the joy of living and of creative activity.

This book of Romagnoli's gives an account of the new teaching of the blind, enlightened by careful scientific thought and defended by examples. It should be kept in mind that this is in substance the teaching that is the most valuable for the sighted, that which attaches more importance to life than to school and organizes the school as an experience of life.

This is the reason that I, who have no competence specifically in pedagogy, venture to present this remarkable book by a blind man, a teacher of the blind. It is an excellent opportunity, since I have had the good fortune to read the book in manuscript, to advise at once that teachers of the sighted should study it, as it is remarkably adapted educationally to enrich their minds.

As for the blind, the new scholastic legislation has boldly prescribed the requirement of instruction equal to that for the sighted. While the administration has taken note of the capacity of individual existing institutions to provide this, the thought of Romagnoli, which is outlined in this book and was received by me when I had the great good fortune to preside over the Italian elementary schools under the guidance of Gentile, has been governed by an ideal: - to attain the coeducation of blind with sighted children, giving them the necessary integration outside of school.

We shall arrive at this point soon if the kindergarten, or

from its responsibility and accountability towards the public and the
various groups of society to which it is directly responsible
him, the responsibility is independent and free in the
of justice and of objective reality.

This book of responsibility is not an account of the
realization of the state, established by various responsible groups
and defined by the state. It should be said in this regard
is in accordance with the fact that in the past, while the
society, that with various more or less
school and organization the school as an organization of life.
This is the reason that I, too, have no responsibility.

Responsibility is freedom, freedom to prevent this responsibility
book of a blind man, a teacher of the blind. It is an
essential responsibility, since I have the right to be
the body in responsibility, to advise at once that the
should be able to do it, as it is responsibility and responsibility
to control these things.

As for the blind, the new educational legislation has
determined the responsibility of the blind to the state and
society. With the responsibility the blind have as the
of individual education responsibility to society, the
of responsibility, which is defined in this book and was
to be, when I was the first book written in French with
rather elementary knowledge about the situation of the blind, has been
concerned by the state - to obtain the recognition of the blind with
higher education, better than the necessary information which
of knowledge.

As well as this book is the responsibility, it

III

preparatory classes of the blind, correct the initial deficiency of physical-sensorial development and thus normalize the pupil deprived of sight. Then with a few not difficult adjustments, the ordinary teacher of all children will be the natural teacher of the blind, while the specialized teacher, in a separate and subsidiary position, will have duties more suitable to him.

Thus also will disappear the ruinous prejudice in regard to the necessity of giving a premature professional specialization to blind children in music or manual work. Blind children will at last have their own childish development, the joyousness of childhood, to which music and work and any other occupation whatsoever are only means of inward enrichment and the serene expression of spiritual growth.

If in the year of scholastic reform there had been no other conquest than that of the decree concerning the blind - and the deaf mutes, also set free and no less dear to Italian educators - there would have been still great ground for satisfaction for those who are working with invincible faith for the improvement of teaching.

Romagnoli and the other valiant ones who assisted Minister Gentile and me in this work deserved that in the first book to appear since the reform these words should be written to consecrate the sacred pact of alliance between the sighted and the blind for the new education of those children who, bereft of physical light, should therefore acquire the light of all men, creative intelligence, living as completely as possible the life of all.

GIUSEPPE LOMBARDO-RADICE

Quercianalla, Leghorn,
September 12, 1924

University classes of the kind, covered the initial 50-
 library of experimental psychology and then continued
 the study of behavior of man. When with a few exceptions
 subjects, the ordinary student of the subject will be
 the natural teacher of the kind, while the specialized research,
 in a separate and supplementary position, will have become more
 suitable to him.

One who will disagree the former position is that
 to the necessity of giving a more extensive specialization
 to the student in some of the more important fields will
 be likely to result in some of the more important fields
 at least have their own specialized development, the importance of
 which, to which some of the more important fields will
 whatever the only means of finding evidence and the necessity
 of specialization of experimental research.

It is the fact of specialization that there has been no other
 movement than that of the more important fields - and the
 need arises, since not free and no less than to Italian education -
 there would have been with great progress for specialization for
 those who are working in the individual fields for the improvement
 of research.

Somehow and the other value ones are limited to the
 field and as in this work however that in the first place the
 special value the value the value should be related to knowledge
 the limited part of knowledge between the subject and the field for
 the new education of those subjects who, partly of present time,
 should therefore require the field of all men, creative intelligence,
 living in complete and complete the field of all.

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH
 RESEARCH AND RESEARCH
 RESEARCH AND RESEARCH

PREFACE

In 1906 when my Introduction to the Education of the Blind, published by Zanichelli, appeared, its reception filled me not with pride but with wonder. In the preface to that pamphlet I had written in all sincerity: "Too much is written today, and there are not enough readers. So, trained in the joy of sacrifice, I have always felt satisfaction from youth up in determining to remain a perpetual reader. I have kept this difficult vow of silence from love of my neighbor and of letters, even though it seemed to me that I had something worth saying. Ideas are in the air, and there is always someone who expresses them. But the blind need a spokesman, that those who see may know and help them with judgment and results comparable to the kindness and pity for them which they cultivate. And those who see are curious and eager to know about this subject, as I myself have opportunity to test daily.

"So as an official announcer of a public matter, not as an author, I give it out, as through various circumstances of nature and fortune it has been my lot to discover it. And I shall find consolation if it can be used for some good purpose. I have something else also in store, the second part, to complete the present work. But I will keep it in reserve a little longer, to await the reception given to this."

Its reception then was far superior to my modest expectation. The second part did not appear, however, because the very favor accorded to the first seemed to me to make the second unnecessary. The chief difficulty in the education of the blind is ~~in~~ not knowing them well. Since my attempt to make them known seemed so successful,

whoever had understood that pamphlet ought now, I thought, to be able to educate a blind person, or at least to make an effective contribution toward doing so.

I attended the Congress for the Amelioration of the Blind at Rome, and naturally I thought I had nothing more to do than sketch an outline of the practical conclusions implicit in these premises. Again I had a reception superior to my expectation, hence a new conviction that my thought needed no more explanation, that it was no longer mine, but a common possession, as I had foreseen. Yet to my great disillusionment I was forced to perceive that the votes of this Congress remained votes, and that those who had lavished most praise on me continued to do very nearly as before. On the contrary, I was isolated, as if on a pedestal, an exception, to be admired but not imitated. The schools for the unfortunate blind remained asylums rather than schools, while those who through great effort had, like myself, freed themselves from misfortune, were also placed, honoris causa, outside the general rule.

Then I was seized by a deep distrust in the usefulness of writing, and all the energy I could spare from my teaching duties I devoted to propaganda, since men are moved ^{more} by feeling ~~more~~ than by logic. But in several years of this propaganda, another fact was forced upon me. I had the public with me, but those very persons to whom the function of teaching the blind had been entrusted, cut me off, always most amiably. Or indeed, when certain small matters had been harmonized, certain superficial modifications introduced, these were made to appear as proof that there was no difference between my views and theirs. For, it was said, if few of the blind had been successful, the fault was not that of the teachers but was due to the impossibility of doing more with the

means at their disposal, or to the restiveness of most of these excessively unfortunate pupils.

Things were going badly, because if we had shouted the truth too loudly, we should have got the doors closed inexorably in our face, the doors of those institutions of which as yet we did not have the key. The new friends we had made - the few comrades who like myself had succeeded in gaining an independent position - were still too new and too few to give us an effective alliance. The public would see only the ugly and repellent aspect of blind young people rebelling against their teachers, their benefactors; ungrateful youths, or on the most favorable assumption, enthusiasts who because of a few individual exceptions wished to overturn the traditions of admirable and famous institutions with imprudent, undesirable innovations.

It was then that there was founded at Bologna, on the occasion of the Sixth Congress for the Amelioration of the Blind, at the end of 1910, the Society of Blind Teachers. Its first intention was to form a strong organization of blind young people, in order to obtain economic, pedagogical and moral improvements, all just and indispensable. But from the first meeting it was understood that they could arrive at this end only by improving the position of the individual teachers with means apart from the special institutions; until having become more cultivated and skilful, each would be able in his own surroundings to accomplish the work of reform and peaceful penetration of the directive councils. Therefore the Society settled its immediate program by calling itself, "The Society for the Culture of Blind Teachers."

As I was entrusted with the presidency of this Society, which held in common, unfortunately, only needs and aspirations, my duty,

the one thing I could do, was to try to give the example of a school that would be the concrete fruit of our experience. Here methods which were praised by all but as yet accepted by none would be shown to be practical and would command such respect as to insure imitation. This school would naturally become the training school where blind teachers could become qualified to direct the teaching in their institutions. Sighted young people, with an apprenticeship favorably guided by their life and teaching, would become our faithful and intelligent eyes and would take our methods into all the schools; on the simple condition that if the results were good, the Government would intervene with its authority to require the schools for the blind to use this technical specialized personnel.

In the name of the Society for the Culture of Blind Teachers, I presented a memorial to His Excellency Luzzatti, then Minister of the Interior, since up to that time the institutions for the blind, under the general name of "charitable institutions," were under that Ministry. Minister Luzzatti received the memorial favorably and instructed the Director General of the Civil Administration, ^{Commendatore} ~~Commander~~ Pironti, ^{Commendatore} Then Senator, to help as much as possible.

^{Commendatore} ~~Mr.~~ Pironti pointed out that it was not to be hoped the State would take the initiative in establishing a new model institution, because of the considerable burden of expense. And even if the State were willing to meet this expense, much time would be needed for study of the project and its execution. He advised therefore doing the work in some existing institution, which the Government would willingly subsidize to effect the desired transformation and integration.

I had had occasion to visit the Margherita Hospice for the Blind in Rome, founded in 1876 by Her Majesty the Queen Mother, then

Princess, with the triple purpose of ophthalmic hospital for the curable, school for those who could be educated, and asylum for those to whom nothing better could be given. The hospital section had been abolished after the founding of the trachoma hospital at Santa Onofrio. The pupils had also been almost entirely given up, because the sisters employed at the Hospice were not sufficient in numbers and had not had the necessary preparation. There remained only some girls of school age and some young women who had been educated there previously with much kindness, which means not without some good results; so that they were then teaching what they knew to their younger companions.

With any other institution it would have been much more difficult to come to an understanding, but here there was no conflict, since there was no real teaching personnel and no traditions or acquired rights to be violated. Then too the institution was in the locality most desirable for the kind of education which we considered best. It had premises adequate for establishing the school and a large area suitable for building, so that it could be enlarged if necessary, also equipment of linen-room, kitchen and heating-plant sufficient for a much larger number of persons. Finally, I found the President of the Hospice, Senator Duke Torlonia, enthusiastic about my project, and I was even more fortunate in meeting with the approbation and encouragement of the August Founder. In her youth she had taken pains to visit the best kindred institutions of foreign countries, and had seen with sorrow the institutions which she had founded to emulate them become limited to the antiquated function of an asylum.

Under these auspices I prepared myself for the task of showing at last, no longer by words but by deeds, even in Italy, that our methods are not utopian.

PART FIRST

THE EXPERIMENT

THE PERSONS THAT I FOUND

My visits to the Margherita Hospice began on April 17, 1912. Since the tramway did not as yet go to that neighborhood, a carriage had been placed at my disposal, to take me to the institution at hours when my presence would not disturb the rule of the community.

In the unit which interested me most, I found five little girls under thirteen years of age, together with about twenty young women who had grown up in the Hospice. Some of them had already passed thirty years day by day in a life of equality with that of their little companions and not differing from it except in a feeling of humility and resignation which made them more docile and devout. Their heads and shoulders were stooped by hours of sitting at work, knitting, crocheting or embroidering, or playing the piano, always as elementary students, for want of teachers and books. Anyone who has visited the catacombs and experienced the sadness and peace which they inspire will be able to form an idea of my first impression.

There was, however, something profoundly sweet in that sad docility. Each little girl was entrusted to a grown one, who took care of her like an older sister, putting into this relationship all the affection of her heart, and finding cause for great joy at every advance, or for encouragement at every failure. The sisters, big and little, were all in charge of a nun, their companion whenever her age and the level of her mind and culture made them forget the superiority of her habit and her sight.

My five little girls then were remarkably wise for their age. Not only were they obedient, but they explained also at great length

the reasons why one should be good and resigned to the will of God and of one's superiors. The smallest, Anita, who was likewise the greatest chatterbox, attempted also to explain the advantage of being deprived of sight, on account of being less exposed to the dangers of the world and deserving a more excellent place in Paradise. The gayety and roguishness of this little girl were the diversion of her older companions and of the nuns. She knew everything, she explained everything, and she felt at ease with anyone. At the age of seven she already knew how to read and she had learned by heart the primer and little text book. She also told the color of certain materials that she knew. Shirts of smooth or slightly rough weave were white. The aprons had black and white stripes. She soon distinguished them by certain coarser threads which stood out in the texture. She also distinguished all her companions and the nuns by their step or by touching their hands or often by merely brushing against their dress. Anita was the gauge of the resistance or approbation which the air of the outside world that I brought with me encountered in the community.

During the hours of study the little ones not infrequently made a disturbance by their restlessness. But during the hours of recreation they passed in line behind their grown companions, or gathered in a corner to play in a circle, only to rest very soon sitting on a bench, like the blind boys described in "Heart" by De Amicis.

As long as I confined myself to listening to them or to telling them stories, or indeed to commenting on a poem, large and small hung on my lips. But when I began to invite the little girls to run, protests and remonstrances assailed me. Play was dangerous and too fatiguing!

Who would believe that the chief difficulty in educating the blind does not consist in teaching them to read or do accounts, or even to acquire all the knowledge possible by means of speech or books, but to run and play, to do those things which other children do not need to be taught, but from which they must sometimes be restrained?

Nevertheless, even today, while all educators are proclaiming the necessity of having the school proper preceded by the kindergarten, the poor blind children in all our institutions, except a very few - and for our consolation, also in all or nearly all the institutions in France and Germany - have no sooner entered than they are placed on the benches of the first elementary class, or at the most, of a preparatory class. More or less thought is given to improving the textbooks or the procedure of object lessons, but the deficiency in what is most fundamental and most harmful is not faced, that is, the antipathy to exercise and physical and sensorial development.

The teachers entrench themselves behind the responsibility or the lack of means, since, they say, to start the blind without danger at running and the free activities of other children would necessitate a guard for each one; besides, a teaching adult cannot resist running after the children and breaking his neck. They also say - and with truth - that most blind children, when they enter an institution, hate exercise. It is necessary to force them, to drag them, frequently with violence, and the effort is doubly disagreeable. This grieves and irritates them, as if they were not unfortunate enough. Their disposition, it is said, is quite different, and perhaps nature wisely orders their distaste for dangerous recreation, while she makes them in general so precocious in enjoying the pleasures of the mind.

It is not true that nature is so generous, that the deprivation of one sense offers great compensations. What is taken away in an

hour may be compensated for, in the most favorable cases, with a long effort of adaptation and practise. I quote textually what Pierre Villey writes on this subject, because the perfect agreement of his thought with mine increases its authority. Villey has been blind from childhood and is a highly authoritative writer on this subject. (1)

"However instinctive the process of compensation may be, it must not be thought that it develops in all circumstances and that it is enough to let it alone. In reality, rather than being a stimulus, the loss of one sense may be stupifying to the organism; instead of refining the other senses, it may have the effect of dulling them. Griesbach even maintained that there is a psychological law that when one sense is extinguished, the others are attenuated by sympathy, and he believed he had deduced this law from his esthesiometric measurements. The truth is that the disappearance of one sense is probably without immediate effect on the other senses, but puts the individual into a condition, at least for a time, that may cause injury to them. The loss involves him in great dangers and the first task of the teacher is to ward these off." (2)

The blind child in swaddling clothes is no less lively than other children. But no sooner has he begun to walk than his parents' fear of his getting hurt, the smaller variety of stimuli and the major difficulty of orientation conspire to make him indifferent, so that

(1) After having obtained the post of Professor in the Faculty of Letters at the University of Caen, with a learned and esteemed study of Montaigne, Villey, in the maturity of his experience and his culture, has published two books on the blind which are among the most important of their kind in the literature of the world:- Le Monde des aveugles, Essai de psychologie. Paris, Flammarion, 1918. La Pédagogie des aveugles. Alcan, 1922.

(2) La Pédagogie des aveugles, p. 8.

soon even his need of exercise is impaired and his vitality appreciably lowered. He tries in vain to concentrate on the slight movements and meagre perceptions within reach of his hand or range of his hearing.

Blind persons are often seen nodding their heads, swaying to and fro, or walking around and around in a space a ^{metre} ~~yard~~ square. Others continually move their hands before their eyes, when a glimmer of sight remains to them, to arouse sensations of light and shadow. Other cases, apparently less pitiful, but no less serious, are of loquacity and precocious wisdom, like that of our little Anita. These poor creatures are intoxicated by words and vague fancies. They build a whole world of their own of empty, unreal images, and cling to them so strongly as to experience great sorrow and offer strong resistance when anyone wishes to take these from them.

Among the boys who were my schoolmates, those who seemed most promising at the age of seven, except a few fortunate ones of highly exuberant temperament, were at ^{twelve} ~~seven~~ almost all mediocre. And a considerable number were, unexpectedly, not able at twenty to complete a modest course of study. They ended in some asylum or by living on charity, just because their precocity was not sound and deceived their teachers. We are not speaking of the poor blind children who are deficient at seven, or called deficient. But Dr. Armitage, (1) the most praiseworthy reformer of educational methods for the English blind, wrote thirty years ago that in schools for the blind where physical education was introduced, the percentage of defectives fell rapidly from thirty or thirty-six to six or eight.

(1) Dr. T. R. Armitage, The Education and employment of the blind. What it has been, is, and ought to be. Italian translation by A. Ferrich, Florence, Tipografia Cooperativa, 1890. This book is even today one of the most important and most to be recommended on the subject.

Nothing then is more misleading than the precocity of blind children. It is the struggle of the spirit not to be overcome by the darkness of the body.

~~THE~~ SYMBOLS OF THE OLD AND THE NEW EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

A STATUE BY GRITA AND A DESIGN BY BISTOLFI

The conditions of the beings gathered in this Hospice appeared to the visitor nobly carved in a beautiful marble statue placed in the parlor. It represents a blind girl seated with an open book on her lap. Her left hand holds the large volume, open at the page on which is written in relief:

"Do not tell me that morning is returning
To awaken sleeping things ..."

with what follows of that famous poem. The right hand is in the act of reading, with the index finger on a letter and the other fingers held up, in the realistically portrayed attitude of the blind trained in the bad method, still in use, of reading with only one finger, as if the others were an encumbrance. The hand is reading those pathetic verses, but the face, the gracious face of a young woman still a girl in spirit, with eyes closed, is far away from the passive reading of the hand, absorbed in vague thought. It is said that the statue was taken from life and portrays the features of a girl in the Institution for the Blind at Milan.

The blind girl in whose album Giacomo Zanella wrote the verses, "Wouldst thou call thyself unhappy, maiden pilgrim ..." was more cultivated, more beloved of her family, noble and rich. (1) *Therefore*

(1) Baroness Fanny Weigelsperg.

she is less sad, less vague, with a more conscious and stronger faith. This girl has hope rather than faith in her heart and expression. She is in an asylum, far from her own people. Her life flows slowly between the walls of a cloister, without the dignity of a religious habit, of a chosen community, without having been able to learn "the pure hidden joys of the hidden virgins." "So sitting content, I await my season," says the blind girl of Zanella. This girl, neither content nor impatient, but passive, awaits her season, as the sleeping chrysalis in its waxen case awaits the time for coming forth from the prenatal tomb to fly free in the azure of springtime.

The Queen Mother had purchased this statue from the sculptor Grita and presented it to the Hospice. She could not have selected a more suitable place. The girls called the statue Modesta and regarded her as their sister. They said that she was almost alive. She was in fact the image of a companion of theirs and even I never passes before her without a silent salute.

Wishing to contrast this statue with a vigorous portrayal of the new orientation of our education, I asked this of Leonardo Bistolfi. With the goodness of his heart and the intuition of his genius, Leonardo Bistolfi immediately granted my request, and I have the good fortune to be able to describe his work in his own words:-

"The design is composed of a pediment, as I will call it, long horizontally and enclosed by straight lines on three sides and above by a line slightly curved in an arch. The lower straight line, however, is to be broken near the middle to leave space for a figure which has the upper part of the body framed by the lines of the pediment, while the lower part descends and is drawn in profile on the open background of the page. This figure, with a gesture of will and joy, is freeing herself from a great dark veil which still envelops her somewhat below, but flies about her head in complex coils, diffusing

itself in the space of the long rectangle to the very edges and becoming ever darker. It is Will, Intelligence, freeing herself from the veils of darkness which envelop her and becoming Light itself."

My wish and that of my friends that the design should be carved in a beautiful high relief, expressing all the joy and the noble admonition of blindness emancipated by knowledge and inner power, could not be carried out. And Modesta is still there, waiting, neither sad nor trusting, in a corner of the parlor.

THE BEGINNING OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION FAVORABLE CONDITIONS OF THE VILLA AND ITS ENVIRONS

To bring into this enclosure the animation of movement, cares and common anxieties seemed to me almost a profanation, like uncovering a tomb. This sense of pity never^{entirely} left me and made me delay, so as not to cause injury by making improvements with excessive haste, not to shock susceptibilities, often excessive, and not to endanger frailness, deserving only of reverence, which shock or blame would have hurt without other results. Therefore I limited my direct interest to the five little girls and I treated them like convalescents from a long illness.

But it was necessary first to make them enthusiastic about exercise and play. The place could not have been more favorable. It is an old papal villa, which still keeps the name of Casale Santo Pio Quinto, and a window is still shown from which that pontiff may have had the famous vision of the victory of Lepanto. Afterwards the villa belonged to the Chigi family, then it fell into ruins. The building was then adapted for the dwelling of a community, and the surrounding land, eighteen hectares, enclosed by walls and copiously irrigated, was rented to a farmer. There remain, however, numerous ^{vestiges} ~~traces~~ of the original

magnificence. There are still ruins of niches, temples of nymphs and fountains. The basins are used for farming purposes and the abundant water for irrigation.

The Casale stands on a hill, which, sloping down in a semi-circle to the north toward St. Peter's, forms a small valley enclosed on three sides. From this direction must have been the principal approach, by the road today called the Via Gelsomino, outside the Porta Cavalleggeri. A broad avenue ornamented with trees and statues wound through the valley to the foot of a great fountain. Trees and statues are there no longer, and the avenue is a grassy field path cut by deep ruts hollowed in all directions by rustic carts. At the fountain, of which there remain the basin and the abundant jet of water, the avenue divides. The principal branch goes up on the left to another fountain, slightly less ruined, over which hangs a large niche. Above is a double row of terraces, to which one ascends by two flights of steps, with balustrades and steps in disrepair but still in use. The upper terrace is as long as the north side of the building and serves today in the hours of recreation as a walk for the old women.

The other branch of the avenue which divides at the great fountain goes up to the other extremity of the hill, where there rises a construction similar to the lower part of the principal one:- a large niche between two smaller niches and a double flight of steps which go up in a semi-circle to a terrace raised in the manner of a belvedere. A grove of laurels between the building and the belvedere used to occupy the central part of the semi-circle, but the trees were cut down for firewood during the war.

All this part of the villa, or let us say, of the estate, on account of being in rather bad condition, was unknown to my pupils. But little by little it became the most loved, because it was the most

varied and best suited to arouse emotions of novelty and difficulty.

The present approach from the opposite side, however, is very convenient. The old Via Aurelia, coming out from the Porta S. Pancrazio, between the Villa Panfili on the left and the Paolo Acqueduct on the right, joins the new Via Aurelia, which starts from the Porta Cavalleggeri. A little before this joining it flanks a long wall, which encloses the south and southeast sides of Pius V.'s villa. The wall is broken by a large barred gate on which is written, "Margherita of Savoy Hospice for the Indigent Blind." Since 1915 a tramway line starting from the Piazza di S. Pietro has come to the Madonna del Riposo, which is almost at the conjunction of the old Via Aurelia with the new. So it is now more advisable to come from this direction, since from the Madonna del Riposo, taking the lane on the left, one arrives in two hundred paces at the southwest boundary of the Hospice. Here is the house of the farmer, at the first gate which breaks the enclosing wall, and at the second gate is the main entrance, with the above-mentioned inscription. All these roads are very quiet and the blind can practise walking alone without danger. From the farmer's house to that of the porter there is also an inside drive more than three hundred metres long, almost parallel to the enclosing wall, somewhat spoiled by carts, but low and not dangerous. There are also many other drives, where the pupils can walk without being seen by outsiders, while one or two assistants are enough to watch them from nearby hilltops.

From the principal gate, between the house of the porter on the left and the chapel on the right, one enters a broad rectangular garden, which my pupils called the garden of the cross, because it is cut crosswise by two wide paths covered with fine gravel and flanked by hedges of myrtle. The four grass plots were shaded by large trees and planted here and there with flowers. Opposite the outside gate

was another, the key to which was kept only by the sisters. This gate leads into the great inner courtyard, which has in the centre a fine ample cistern. On three sides is the sixteenth century building. On the fourth side only the foundations had been laid. A wall separates the courtyard from the garden of the cross.

To protect the inmates from cold and dampness when they went from the Casale to the chapel, the Administration had had built along the east side of the garden a passageway more than two metres wide and paved with smooth tiles. I state these details because they will serve to make my account clear. From the south enclosing wall to the terrace over the valley, a wide path along which were trees and benches was appointed as a walk for the young women and children, while for the old ~~women~~ ^{men} were reserved the west side of the building and the garden of the cross. The inner court serves for recreation after supper, but of course the various units group themselves separately.

I had the privilege of taking my pupils anywhere, but the first gymnasium was the courtyard, long, wide, all on one level and highly resonant, so that orientation was made easier. The cistern, hexagonal or octagonal, I do not remember which, surrounded by two or three steps, had also its good uses without danger, as a point of reference, a place of observation, rest and so forth. But before they would go there to run and play as I wished, no little time was necessary to win the docility and consent of the little girls. It was too cold or ~~too~~ hot, too wet or dusty, or a pebble was out of place here or there.

The first game was to roll a large hoop in a passageway. The sound intoxicated them and the desire of pursuing it excited them to exercise. They pushed against each other to pick it up when it fell and each wished to be the first to lift it and give it a push to make it roll again, and harder. Then every day, little presents - steamboats, tops, automobiles. I remember that once I took a metal kitten

which chased a mouse. Not only were the little ones amused but the older members of the unit also wished to touch it and make it run on a table, and were vexed when one of them wound the spring too tight and the game ended.

Our first gymnasium then was the courtyard and the first incentive to running in the open air was sweetmeats. "Who arrives first shall have a sweetmeat," cried a teacher. And the children moved all together "as the sheep go out of the enclosure," easily arriving all together, after having first tried to push their neighbors back with their hands, and so getting mutually entangled.

It was necessary to devise another incentive, to begin to chase the teacher, rather than the professor, because she could see, and for her to cry, "Who touches me shall have the sweetmeat." Thus it was possible to grade the running and stimulate each competitor, so as to pay attention to the moving objective rather than to follow the footsteps of her companions. It was also easier sometimes to help the slowest by encouragement.

The quickest were called to the assistance of the professor and the teachers, passing from chasing to being chased. Pursuit in a straight line then gave way to windings and hiding-places; so that after a few weeks delight had taken the place of hesitation and the children had gained both agility and the perception of obstacles.

There are two things, however, which teachers must always have in view:- new objectives, because the stimulus of running for the sake of running is not enough, still less to be moved to do these exercises by obedience; also to grade the difficulties and the effort, to avoid the easy depression of "I can't," and the no less easy satisfaction with the first success, resulting in stubborn unwillingness to deviate from movements already mechanical.

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So it happened that I had to invent a long series of games, as occasion and need prompted. I should not think it necessary to digress to speak of them, if I had not noted a great curiosity about them, and not only in visitors unversed in pedagogy. Even Villey desires that someone suggest and describe in detail games that are desirable for the blind. Therefore I have decided to give fuller examples.

GRADING OF GAMES FOR MUSCULAR EXERCISE

The first exercise ought to be running after someone, because in that way the sound of the steps of the one who goes ahead serves as stimulus and guide. It will be useful at first to increase the sound by cries. This way is preferable to taking the child by the hand and dragging him behind, unless he is so stiff-jointed and so timid that it is necessary to give him confidence in his own legs and communicate energy to him with the hand. But even when he is obliged to begin at this lowest grade, it is advisable to have as an objective someone ahead to chase. Without such an objective the blind child remains, so to speak, passive at the various successive points of the space, even when he is eager for the goal, like one who travels in a night train and desires the arrival with vain anxiety.

To understand this better, think how when you are running surrounding objects flee in a direction opposite to your eyes. Unless the blind man leaves behind him voices and sounds of persons or things, he experiences the sensation of hurling himself into the void. This sensation may be pleasing, but only when it is active, that is in a greatly advanced stage of development of muscular sense and imagination.(1)

(1) Cf. my article, The Blind and the Automobile, in the Corriere della Sera February 7, 1908.

The one who runs ahead will do well at first to increase the auditory stimuli, clapping his hands or crying out, or even fastening a small bell to his coat. Avoid noise, however, which confuses and bewilders. Do not entrust such an office to a child, or choose one who will find his amusement not in running but in animating and enlivening his little companions. It will not be hard to find good helpers among the older pupils, especially among the girls.

Running in a straight line or in wide curves ought to continue until the children have acquired a certain nimbleness of limb and fondness for this exercise, a thing which comes sooner or later, but which must not be lacking. It is the best indication of the physiological equilibrium which is being restored. The sooner the child is initiated into running, the less will be the necessary effort of the corrective teaching. To train the children in running it is customary in some institutions to fasten them to a rope which the teacher drags behind him. I have sometimes used this expedient, but with children already skilful, for an athletic purpose, to incite them to attain the maximum speed, and also with some objective of a match or other game. Otherwise it does not seem to me advisable, for the reasons given above.

For the same reasons, what is done at the institution of Overbrook seems to me a great waste of space and material. (1) Wires are extended at a certain distance from each other. On each wire runs a handle to be grasped by the blind child, who must accustom himself to running by drawing the handle from one end of the wire to the other. What a waste of resources and means, by obtaining one at a time those advancements which nature, who is not analytical, grants only on condition that we make them grow and flower together, in the free and joyous initiative

(1) See Villey, op. cit. p. 35.

of play!

Second grade: from running in a level open place, let the child advance to being chased. At this stage also care must be taken that he has a keen interest in not being caught. The one who chases him should not have, or should not exert, too much agility and should wait to stimulate rather than to catch the fugitive, exciting him with cries and resounding threats, like the heroes of Homer:- "Surrender! Ah, rash one, thou shalt not escape from my hands!"

The child is then promoted to the third grade, which is again to be chased, no longer in a straight line, but with windings and turnings in all directions. This exercise, if done with skilful grading, gives much pleasure and profit, since the children learn to manage themselves, changing speed and direction at every step. They become accustomed even to surprising and forestalling the movements of the opponent. Then when in this kind of games the children have advanced from chasing to being chased, they will have gained sufficient elasticity and attention to pass without danger to running on irregular ground.

Palmira, one of the five pupils, after about two months ^{had} ~~had~~ become so agile that more than once she tired out the sighted teachers before allowing herself to be caught in the courtyard or a meadow. This little girl was then twelve years old but entirely devoid of sight. But it should be noted that she had lost her sight at the age of five, after her limbs had been accustomed to much running and jumping in the country. Her stay in the Hospice had only made her torpid. Another girl, on the other hand, Olga, who had retained a vestige of sight but had not been trained in exercise in her early years, became accustomed to it much later and never gained the agility of Palmira.

REMNANTS OF SIGHT AND THE COEDUCATION OF THE BLIND AND SEMI-BLIND

The conservation of a little sight, if it is not made use of early, is often a cause of hesitation and false apprehension, because the indistinct shadows make one fear imaginary obstacles and distract the auditory attention. Nevertheless a remnant of visual sensation, however small, is an inestimable privilege in comparison to total blindness. But fortunately the latter afflicts only the minority of those who must be counted practically among the blind. Only Anita and Palmira, among my five little ones, were entirely devoid of sight, and Palmira treasured the memory of it.

It will be helpful henceforth to understand clearly about this question:- it has been disputed by doctors and educators what is the minimum degree of sight beyond which one must be considered blind. The best opinion is to classify as blind those who do not see well enough to walk fast and to be able to read ordinary print. Then it is discussed whether the semi-blind should be educated separately. And it has happened sometimes, indeed too often, that some of these have been refused by the institutions for the blind and by the school for the sighted.

The coeducation of the semi-blind with the totally blind is useful to both. Too often these remnants of sight are destined to become attenuated with the years, and living with the blind accustoms the semi-blind to save their weak sight with the aid of the other senses, thus increasing the probability of conserving it. Then the presence of the semi-blind is also of the greatest utility to their companions who are totally deprived of sight, since they are intermediaries and interpreters of the shining world. But care must be taken not to sacrifice them, and account must be taken of the greater or less degree of sight of each one, so that it can be trained as a

subsidiary and complementary sense.

One should not be afraid, in doing this, of wounding the totally blind, since it is important for them, much more than is imagined, to accustom themselves to know what are the qualities which they continually hear expressed in speech and which they notice are the most used in common life. If the teacher speaks of these qualities not by themselves alone, but as concomitant with and complementary to those which they too can perceive, they will gradually form spontaneously images and analogies, sufficiently approximate and faithful for the correct use of speech and intercourse. Hence the blind little by little accustom themselves to make the common esthetic life their own, in their own way and according to their need.

Clear, cool, fresh water! How would you explain the first adjective in a school for the blind? Clear, like the glass which lets the light and heat of the sun pass through the panes of a closed window; or as when the air is calm and makes the slightest sounds heard from a distance, and lets the tops of the mountains be seen, where the bleating flocks pasture; or as when the water is clean and flows pure like air through the hands and falls resounding in drops like pearls. (1) Each understands what he can, all that he can. And he perceives by intuition and divines the rest and is satisfied, content and eager to understand better, then to correct, if new analogies, more abundant and more real, give him the pleasure of increasing his images and perceptions.

(1) Running water has different sounds, according to the temperature. When it is very hot, it seems like the flowing of an oily liquid.

ORIENTATION AND ~~AND~~ DISTINGUISHING ~~ON~~ OBSTACLES

As soon as the little girls were able to run alone swiftly and with pleasure, they began games of running together. For this purpose many common games can be adapted, but to keep the interest keener, we took care to change the names and accessories. Thus we had the game of blindman's buff, the cat and the mice, the police and the bandits, the dog and the wolf, and so forth. But frequently there occurred collisions and serious falls, headlong and worse, all the more because my little sheep, as I liked to call them to tease them for this fault, had kept the habit of crowding against one another and following the quickest in order not to have the trouble of finding the way each for herself. It was necessary to decrease the danger of their hurting themselves, all the more now that pleasure and enthusiasm made them unready to stop at the first call and frequently too rash. Then we thought of other games by means of which to train them to find their way independently, to *develop* readiness of attention, and to fall with dexterity and caution.

The game of the tramway. The garden of the cross was well suited to this game. The four extremities of the cross were called the stations of St. Peter, the Termini, the Piazza del Popolo and the Coliseum, the centre the Piazza Venezia. At the centre stood the teacher with a whistle to give the signals. One whistle meant to stop running, because trams had to stop instantly, exactly where they were. Anyone who went one step more was penalized and lost a point in the game. To make sure of stopping immediately was of the utmost importance in any exercise in the open, in order that one assistant alone might guide a large number of pupils without danger. With all at a standstill, we could speak to one or another, put them on guard against a false step, or warn them of an unforeseen obstacle. But such a stop was made more

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 was a country of free oceans. The twentieth was the fact that the United States
 was a country of free worlds.

quickly when not followed by commands or warnings, with the sole object of keeping vigilance alert and in order that in case of imminent danger excitement should not cause injury.

Every child then ^{had to make} ~~made~~ her own ^{round trip} ~~way~~ from one end of the cross to the other and from one arm to the other adjacent one, and in running met others who were going in the opposite direction. In the centre at the Piazza Venezia they often all met and were not to run against each other or slacken their pace or lose their way, a thing which required particular attention, because the paths widened, forming a round space in the intersection. The sun, the echo of the courtyard and the special resonance of each path were to serve as points of reference for each one to set out in the direction appointed and not to be distracted by her companions.

There were also some unforeseen incidents ^{on} ~~along~~ the ^{trip.} ~~way.~~ A teacher - preferably myself, because I could stand foursquare to the shocks, which were not always slight - stayed with hands on guard on the track of one or the other of the trains on its course. If the latter located the obstacle in time, she avoided it and triumphantly pursued her way, or stopped, or jumped back pushed by the arms held out to ward off the collision. If she fell to the ground, there was shame and general derision. It was only much later that inanimate objects were employed, partly because the danger was greater, partly because the fun, and therefore the attention, was less. But the children took pleasure in the sound of obstacles that rolled on the ground, so that they often went in search of them instead of avoiding them.

These crashes of course in the game took the name of collisions and gave occasion for various episodes. To make the tramway network more complete, it was possible to use also the path that went around the garden and thus give a first idea, very rudimentary, of the topography of the principal districts of the City. The falls were harmless, in a layer of

gravel and in the soft espaliers of myrtle.

When the garden of the cross was too small and too well known, (1) we found another place, much more delightful, the embankment of the Acqua Paola. The Aqueduct of the Fountain of the Acqua Paola, covered by an embankment, crosses the farm of the Hospice, whose fountains it feeds. It runs parallel to the southern enclosing wall and the grassy embankment rises little by little in the middle of a large meadow, until it reaches the height of about a metre and a half, with a slope increasingly steep, but everywhere accessible and gentle. It seemed made on purpose for teaching gradually how to climb, to descend and even to roll with grace. And the little girls promptly displayed all their gratitude.

The top, a metre wide and level, had its use too, serving for running in a straight line, with the natural penalty of rolling to the foot for anyone who went astray, unless she knew how to make prompt amendment by checking herself in the middle of the slope and regaining equilibrium.

Afterwards the top of the embankment, to mention only a few of its uses, became, as the case might be, a railroad with one or two tracks, the dike of a river, the glacis of a fortress, the roof of a house, a place for the flight of robbers and the pursuit of the police. The agile robber jumps up and down from one side of the embankment to the other or runs along the crest and at the right moment leaps to one side, dragging her pursuer to unexpected tumbles. She mocks them, lets them hear her clap her hands at twenty or thirty metres. Then

(1) I am telling in this place, for convenience of exposition, about games the account of which, according to chronological order, ought to be given farther on, since progress was not and could not be so rapid. I shall have occasion to do the same at other times.

cluding the ear of the guards, she passes by them, brushes against their dress and disappears on the soft carpet of the meadow. In the meadow, as on sand or on the thick carpets of rooms, night and pitch darkness for him who finds his way by sound! But adventure now is delightful for our little girls and by exciting their attention, sharpens their sensibility. The teachers will not sit down satisfied with that. They must now invent new games for judging distances, directions and small indications.

The assault on the fortress was a game adapted to develop caution. The guards were lined up along the top of the embankment and the teacher or an agile and crafty companion had to climb the slope cautiously and descend the other side, "into the city," passing between the sentinels without letting them even touch the hem of her garment. The sentinels were posted at a greater or less distance according to their courage and that of their assailants. The latter had to be ready to receive frequently energetic repulses from the guards, who were invested with remarkable zeal for their office. Sometimes, however, it happened that the assailant for fun or from too much zeal herself seized the hand stretched out to repulse her and dragged the guard rolling down the slope, declaring her a prisoner or taking advantage of the free space to leap within the fortress and cry victory.

FIRST EXERCISES IN PLASTIC ART

In hot weather and on rainy days we stayed in school, and there too there was time to be used. Every day I brought some new object and, though it would seem incredible, it was enough for a cup or glass to be of a shape a little out of the ordinary for the little girls not to recognize it and to be very much interested, even after they had identified it. Plastilina and clay were always at their

disposal to reproduce the simplest forms and content themselves with fashioning little balls, plates, rings, as their hands, stiffened by inactivity, and their even more pitiable imaginations were able to conceive and make. It will be better to speak of this kind of work later on, because at first it was not my chief concern, or if it was, I got too meagre results from it. It will be helpful instead to note some general experiences, through which this work was more useful to me than to the pupils.

Plastilina would have seemed preferable, but the little girls touched it with disgust because it soiled the hands, had a disagreeable odor and lost the desired forms too quickly. Clay, on the other hand, especially when it was not too wet, was better adapted to their slow hands, which before modeling had to touch and become oriented. This consideration was confirmed by reflecting on my own experience. One who sees uses the hand only to modify what he has judged. Then he returns to observe with sight whether the material has responded to the intention of the art. But for the blind person the form must be stronger, so as not to be spoiled while he is examining it. Therefore if plastilina is to be used, it must be very hard, and it always presents the difficulty of softening in the heat of the hands, which necessarily delay a long time on it. In my school, therefore, plastilina is no longer used.

Another hint that I had from the little girls at this time was that it was not necessary to seek the effect but to divine the intention. Like those "souls and flames of brick color" of the tabernacle on the road of Don Abbondio which only the imagination of the peasants recognized as such, so children, all children, make their images with formless daubs which they alone understand and admire. Boys like Giotto or Dupré were recognized as geniuses because they drew and modeled

It is a very common mistake to suppose that the only way to get the most out of a book is to read it straight through from beginning to end. This is not the case. The best way to get the most out of a book is to read it in a way that suits your own needs and interests. For example, if you are interested in a particular subject, you may want to read the chapters on that subject first. Or, if you are interested in the author's style, you may want to read the introduction and the conclusion first. The point is to read the book in a way that makes sense to you.

Another common mistake is to suppose that the only way to get the most out of a book is to read it very carefully. This is also not the case. The best way to get the most out of a book is to read it in a way that is comfortable for you. If you are a fast reader, you may want to read the book quickly. If you are a slow reader, you may want to read the book slowly. The point is to read the book in a way that makes sense to you. It is also important to take notes while you read. This will help you to remember the main points of the book and to see how the different parts of the book fit together. Finally, it is important to discuss the book with others. This will help you to see the book from different perspectives and to get a better understanding of its meaning.

Another very common mistake is to suppose that the only way to get the most out of a book is to read it in a particular order. This is also not the case. The best way to get the most out of a book is to read it in a way that suits your own needs and interests. For example, if you are interested in a particular subject, you may want to read the chapters on that subject first. Or, if you are interested in the author's style, you may want to read the introduction and the conclusion first. The point is to read the book in a way that makes sense to you. It is also important to take notes while you read. This will help you to remember the main points of the book and to see how the different parts of the book fit together. Finally, it is important to discuss the book with others. This will help you to see the book from different perspectives and to get a better understanding of its meaning.

what could be appreciated also by adults.

Every child draws or models a rectangle, applies two appendages to the sides, a ball on top, two parallel prolongations below, and says that it is a man. The famous Pinocchio of the Maletti Asylum, which went like hot cakes among the children, serves as a norm. Imagine the inaccuracy of blind children in the plastic reproduction of their models. My assistants, who had sight and were in too great haste to see something visible, and I with them, asked the little girls to make things that were too difficult or too simple, and got no good results. At difficult things, indeed, they set to work with great enthusiasm, but if they asked us to guess what they had made, we discouraged them by not being able to understand. Then we required them to make puerile things, balls and cakes, and that bored them.

It was necessary to invent games for this work too. We started a manufactory of sweetmeats, chocolate drops, ^{doughnuts} ~~buns~~, bread, macaroni and other similar comestibles, besides a manufactory of fruit, stealing the business even from the trees. Then all these heaven sent treasures were put together and sold the next day on the benches of the school. The children learned to count, multiply and divide quickly, as the importunity of the customers demanded. A box of coins of every value, at that time easier to recognize and including centesimi, completed the market. Then the coins returned to the box, except some that went as prizes into the pockets of the cleverest saleswomen. Sweets and fruit then returned to clay, whence they had come.

There were also made, however, coffee and dinner sets, sheep and kittens, which remained a long time in a glass case to please the children. They had so few playthings that they treasured these almost formless sketches. I do not say that they would not have envied the wealthy owners of many beautiful toys, but I think that in this

respect they were happier, since no toy is dearer to a child than that which he makes himself.

Blessed were the times when the toymaking industry did not exist, an industry which interests adults much more than children. It spoils the children's moral sanity, because people think they can buy their happiness and education, while all they do is to make the children exacting and bored before their time, drying up in them the source of originality and initiative. But the conscience of parents is at peace when they have paid for beautiful Christmas presents for their babies, and are only indignant, accusing them of being vandals and ungrateful, if they have enough vitality and initiative to take the precious toys to pieces to see how they are made.

Lotzski wrote that to rummage in his father's waste paper basket is one of the most delightful explorations for the child. As for me, I am thankful that my father did not have the money to buy me boxes of lead soldiers, because fruit stones, which I collected diligently, served perfectly at my command to make squads of soldiers, religious processions or crowds of people. We all know that the most amusing horse for a little boy is a broomstick which he bestrides, and the finest carriage is a chair pushed from behind.

I do not say that we ought to banish toys, especially for blind children, deprived of the innumerable incentives of color and visible forms. On the contrary, if it is useful to have numerous toys accurately imitating real things, I dare say that it is proper for them, to whom these can give approximate tangible images and concrete ideas of objects too large and too dangerous to ^{be} touched themselves. A good and sufficient collection of teaching material can thus be made at low cost with toys. Given a common model, anyone who desired a copy of his own would try to sketch it.

It is interesting also to note that our little pupils had the desire for the practical sooner than for the fanciful. For that reason they loved to repeat numerous copies of the same object instead of varying it. For example, they were not content till they had finished a complete set of plates or cups for six or twelve. The greatest reward for them was that these objects should be carefully preserved, a thing which I permitted willingly as soon as they had gained a certain degree of accuracy and which was more valuable to me than I had foreseen in gaining the confidence of the Administration.

I knew very well that I was not teaching clay modeling for an esthetic purpose, and the selling of sweets and fruit for cash gave me more satisfaction. But people have so much pity for the poor blind that they are amazed when they see them give definite proof of possessing concrete ideas and images about even the simplest objects.

THE PROGRAM FOR REORGANIZING THE INSTITUTION AND THE FIRST VISIT OF THE QUEEN MOTHER

Meanwhile summer had come and the Queen Mother wished before leaving Rome to see the first results of the experiment entrusted to me. Duke Torlonia, President of the Hospice, who had often come to be present at our games, deriving much pleasure from them, asked me to present to him for the occasion a plan for the reorganization of the institution according to my ideas. Since I have kept a copy of this letter, it seems to me suitable to reproduce it here ^{in full} ~~textually~~, as the conclusion of this first part.

Honorable Duke:

First of all I renew my heartfelt thanks, which I have already attempted to express to you in my letter of last February 24, in response to the honor and confidence granted in

asking me to formulate my program for a proper school, to be started in this Hospice for the Blind according to modern standards of pedagogy.

In the above mentioned letter I explained to you the reasons of prudence and tact for which it seemed to me impossible to give a detailed program before having diligently visited the Hospice for some time, and I asked your permission to do this. Her Majesty the Queen Mother with an act of regal munificence gave voluntarily, in addition to her favor, the funds for my study and preliminary experiment. Thanks to the kind solicitude of Mr. Luccardi, barrister, who generously gave me valuable information, advice and assistance, and through the cooperation of the Reverend Mother Superior of the Hospice and the sisters attached to the children, I think I am now able to sketch the plan, which I greatly hope will correspond to your desire.

I began the visits to the Hospice on April 17th and have made to date forty-four. My care has been directed principally to five little girls from eight to twelve years old, who might form the first nucleus of the model school. Their development is inferior on the average to their age. This should be attributed to their lack of physical and sensorial education, a lack indeed common too often hitherto to the majority of the blind. I have begun to stimulate them to running and to games tending to give them ease and freedom of their members, especially of the hands, and the habit of using their senses, teaching them to know and like the active life. It was not an easy thing to accustom them to move fearlessly and to soil their hands with plastilina and clay. It is gratifying

to me now to think of the sadness which I experienced at the beginning.

The beneficial contagion of the gaiety and activity of the little girls was caught also by the grown girls and even the old women, diffusing in that house of the unhappy smiles and the desire to make oneself useful and to dignify misfortune with work. Many have already tried to do something, especially the young women, The sisters and I alike have gained the conviction that material and moral profit may result from this energy. We have encouraged them and studied a suitable organization and distribution of work.

Not to digress from the subject, my program would be to organize the school in three departments, naturally small, I would even say embryonic, at the beginning, but existing together, so as to be adapted to the elements at present in the Hospice that can be used and mutually integrated.

The first department would be composed of the kindergarten and the elementary school, not beyond the third and fourth classes. I put these schools together because, especially as regards the blind, their separation is not only difficult but harmful. The example of the children now present in the Hospice is sufficient. In some respects they would surpass the pupils of the third elementary class, and I daresay even more. In other respects, however, they are below the children of the first year of the elementary school. This is the case in almost all the schools for the blind, because the education of the senses is much slower and that of the intelligence precocious. Therefore it cannot be insisted too much that blind children should be received in school at an early age. Then it will be possible to verify what astonishes many people, that is, that the blind attend with the best results the public schools, with

children who have sight.

At any rate, the education, of the kindergarten, on the foundation of games, development of the senses, and free initiative, ought to assist the school strictly so called. This assistance should be given through the skilfully disguised use of the hours of recreation, combining suitable games and giving much importance to instructive hand work, besides initiating all in music and plastic art, beginning with songs and the primitive modeling of spontaneous childish activity. Not to digress to explain these ideas, particularly to be emphasized when it is a question of educating the blind, permit me to remind you of the various excellent and complete accounts contained in the records of our last congresses.

My desire would be then to send the pupils to take the examinations with sighted children in the public schools, where moreover it is preferable to send them from the fourth elementary class on to attend the courses with the others, but assisting them suitably with tutors, as is done indeed in many schools for the sighted and in families.

The second part of the program would be the school of adjustment, for want of a better term, for those blind, only too numerous, especially until those educated in the new way have grown up, who have received incomplete instruction and therefore cannot gain sufficient profit by the exercise of a profession. In the Margherita Hospice this would be at present the largest school, composed of girls still young enough to learn. I should think of giving a course in general culture for all, seeking also to perfect each one and direct her to the field for which she shows most aptitude, music, typewriting, domestic work and whatnot. Here there comes in well the proverb which makes the sisters and girls of the Hospice laugh, because it is frequently the close of my talks:- "From one thing comes another."

To complete this second part of the program, I may add that the proposal already made in our various congresses and carried out in similar fields would seem to me excellent, that is to make an arrangement with other kindred institutions. For example, we could send the pupils who are most promising in music to Bologna or Milan, to institutions where this art is well taught, receiving in exchange pupils for study in some other branch more cultivated here. Among many other practical advantages for the pupils, this plan would bring a notable economy in each institution.

The third department would be the school for candidates for teachers of the blind. Courses are given for kindergarten teachers, teachers of deaf mutes and defectives, but nothing as yet is done for the preparation of teachers of the blind. The need is great and has already been expressed in the votes of several congresses. This school could be attended for one or two years by young people with a normal school diploma. They would have some lessons in special psychology and pedagogy, but above all training in the apprenticeship and vital experience in the school, which they themselves would acquire from the children. In this way the school would also have teachers at little or no expense. One or two, preferably women, would be enough at first, if more, so much the better. They could be called in turn like the substitutes and apprentices of the public schools. The variety resulting from the changing of teachers would be unified ^{by} the stability of the method and the direction. It would give too the advantage of making the school more alive and always new to the blind, deprived as they are by lack of sight of the majority of those distractions and the eurythmy which are the chief stimulus and means of enriching knowledge and becoming adapted to life.

At the end of each year there would be awarded to these teachers a diploma which I hope it would not be difficult to strengthen by the approval of the Minister of Public Instruction.

Thus, in however small proportions, would be started an organic plan of a school corresponding to all the actual needs of the cause of the blind. With mutual integration of departments, what at first sight would seem like too many irons in the fire in reality is greater economy than would be possible if one of these departments alone were founded. The elementary school would have its teachers in the training school and the training school its apprentices ^{ship} in the elementary school. The school that is in a sense complementary and professional, placed between the other two, would be able to receive and give various advantages of experience, education, scholastic material, and above all of that getting together and contact which promote the exchange of ideas and the spirit of initiative and cooperation on which, especially for the blind, is founded ~~is founded~~ the possibility of working with profit.

These, Excellency, are the outlines of the design which I have the honor to present to you. As to the size of the picture, that will depend on the means. Whatever the beginning may be, it seems to me much better, more satisfactory and surer to begin modestly, since we have riches of good will and faith. We should trust only in progress naturally produced from the growth of experience and results. Thus we work willingly and always with new ardor. This is what for my part I can offer and promise, very little indeed considering the duty I have toward my companions and the desire to reward worthily the faith and honor given me by you and the Council and the encouragement and just expectation of Her Majesty the Queen Mother. But all the better if the intention and the duty are greater than the power, because your

indulgence will know how to sympathize with me, and I shall be safe from the idle presumption of ever having done enough.

With greatest respect, allow me to remain,

Your most obedient,

Augusto Romagnoli.

Rome, June 28, 1912

The visit of Her Majesty was set for the afternoon of June 28, and the reception was prepared with great enthusiasm by all the inmates and the sisters. The usual gray aprons were taken from the children and white dresses with blue hair ribbons were worn. Also the glorious weather in the bright evening of June contributed to give the visit the gayety of a holiday.

"Glorious clear weather" seem like words in painful contrast with the darkness of an institution for the blind, but this is not so. Besides the consideration already ^{pointed out} ~~emphasized~~ that the majority of the blind retain a vestige of sight, the clearness of the atmosphere makes itself felt through the hearing and all the pores of the skin. The experiments of Mr. Parigoule-Romains, intent on demonstrating that there are found in the skin of every part of the human body cells that have a genuine visual power, like the ocelli of the lower animals, have recently been confirming our intuition. Although we need not cultivate an exaggerated illusion about this, which Parigoule-Romains calls peroptic perception, still his experiments make it not irrational to hope that he may open the way for new methods of scientific investigation and practical application for the benefit of the blind. It is certain, however, that the state of the atmosphere has a most remarkable effect on our orientation, I dare say an effect even more considerable than for others, for whom the supremacy of the visual sense is the cause of being much less interested in other concomitant

sensations, the only ones, on the other hand, which we can use.

The Queen Mother stayed for more than two hours at the Hospice, giving encouragement with the affability that is natural to her, and wishing to see all the details of games and handwork. More than once it seemed to her and her attendants that these little ones must see, so great was the agility of their movements, animated as they were by feeling themselves observed with kindly admiration. At one time they were playing the game of catching a thief, who was fleeing on tiptoe. The Queen approached to watch them more closely and one little girl, hearing a light step, turned swiftly, crying, "Here's the thief!" But in the act of seizing him, she encountered a ringed hand and stood petrified, murmuring, "The Queen!" Then, encouraged by the laugh of Her Majesty and of all those present, she returned to the game livelier and bolder. The Queen also permitted the President to have some photographs taken, so I am able to reproduce a souvenir.

When Her Majesty left, with greetings and good wishes, between the lines of eighty inmates, applauding and moved, the holiday sound of the bells of St. Peter's filled all the Casale with harmony, and the swallows sang in the soft sunset, as if to communicate an irresistible joy of hope and new life.

PART SECOND

THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE SCHOOL

QUESTIONS OF METHOD AND AUTHORITY
NECESSARY LIMITATIONS AND EXPEDIENTS

Notwithstanding the complete satisfaction of the Queen Mother and the Directive Council, or rather just because of this complete satisfaction, six months passed before I resumed my work at the hospice. In fact, the sisters, who had aided my efforts as long as they thought it was a question merely of games, were seriously concerned when they perceived that these games were the first manifestation of an entire educational method and an organic plan of reorganization. For this plan they were neither prepared nor disposed. Aside from the other reason of being naturally old-fashioned, from long custom they loved these girls, whom they had brought up to the best of their ability, and they feared for them the disturbance of any novelty whatever.

After the visit of the Queen, the newspapers spoke with high praise of the ^{new} school. It was compared with Montessori's, and Montessori herself came to visit it with much interest. Other educators of less reputation, but with ideas notoriously not Catholic, came also. And all this could not fail to add cause for suspicion and opposition on the part of the sisters.

There was no actual opposition, partly because there could be none in face of the disposition of the Council and the Queen, partly because the sisters themselves, at bottom, had perhaps divined that there must be something good to be had for their pupils from my advice and cooperation, provided, of course, it was in a subordinate way.

For my part, I hoped that they would end by assisting me, on condition that the President gave unequivocal orders. And I believed it would be possible also to obtain the wise measure of substituting for some of the sisters who were too old and not adapted to the new program others, younger and better educated, who would be capable of understanding without prejudice the value of my standards. It was obvious that the sisters selected for the care of a hospice could not respond to the aims of an educational institution.

Meanwhile they went to the President and the administration predicting dangers of all sorts. Running and jumping were training for boys rather than girls, and ^{then} there was the gravest responsibility when poor creatures without sight were concerned. Finally, what could they get out of it? Daughters of poor people, they would easily become excited and lose humility, under the illusion of acquiring highly problematical virtues. And then there was the difficulty of defining the powers of the new teaching director, a layman, and of the superior, whose position would be in a sense lowered. It would have been better to build institutions for starting the new method with boys and with separate personnel.

To delay would have caused the loss of too much time and also the best opportunity of finding the means necessary for the desired growth. Therefore it ended in relying on the good will of both parties, and after six months I returned to the hospice with the promise of the sisters to give me all possible coöperation, while the Directive Council undertook to find a form of agreement which would be satisfactory to the sisters, assuring me at the same time authority and adequate means for carrying out my program.

New girls meanwhile had been received at the hospice. The sisters had agreed to find a way of making room, so the number of pupils kept

increasing until it was over twenty. Also there was placed at my disposal a small room near the Casale and just beyond the chapel. The sisters arranged to have meals served to me when I did not return to the city. I was also authorized to introduce on my own responsibility and without expense to the hospice persons who could help me in my educational work. I was permitted to take the pupils out of the hospice for walks and educational visits with the one condition that a sister appointed by the Superior should accompany them. There was further granted me an annual allowance of one thousand lire for the expenses of the cab, for lunches for the pupils when outside the institution and for some refreshment for the persons who gave their services without compensation and who on account of the situation of the institution could not go afterwards to any nearby restaurant. And of refreshment there was no little need, after running and shouting for three or four hours with the children.

I should have preferred to find teachers and assistants among the sisters themselves. Therefore I asked the General of the Order for at least one who had that minimum of teaching preparation which is the normal license. But I received the reply that this was impossible, because the few sisters with diplomas at the disposal of the Order were already promised elsewhere. On the other hand, the reasons and circumstances given above prevented me from removing the sister who up till then had acted as assistant and teacher, although she had neither teaching preparation nor the natural disposition for acquiring it.

In such indefinable and delicate relations of responsibility and authority, as I did not have the means to place beside the ~~the~~ sisters assistants and teachers who could give me all their time, I had to make a virtue of necessity. And it ~~succeeded~~ ^{turned out} in this way.

THE FIRST ORDERING OF THE SCHOOL

The pupils could be divided into ^{two} groups, the five already initiated, who were about in the second elementary class, and the new ones, for whom was required something like the kindergarten and then the first grade. In the unit of the young women there was one, a little older, very earnest and rather efficient, who, gleaning here and there with admirable persistence, had succeeded in acquiring a certain culture. She possessed above all that spiritual preparation which makes one ready to understand and follow a good leader. I therefore did a service to her and to the children in naming her as an assistant teacher. I took also from this unit some others from among the youngest and most intelligent, trying to train them and entrusting to each a small group of pupils. With such helpers I could undertake the teaching of more classes, using in turn and coordinating all the contributions that I could get from the assisting nun and from the kind people who came to my aid.

The schedule of the community was as follows:- rising at half-past five; chapel, breakfast, cleaning, until half-past eight; at eleven, dinner, then récreation until one. From one until half-past ^{two} _{all} retired to the dormitories to leave the sisters free to attend to the special duties of their rule. At six, recitation of the rosary and the reading of meditations, then supper, then a little recreation with gates closed, then about eight, to bed.

The hours at my disposal were then from half-past eight to eleven and from half-past two to six, six hours a day except holidays, among which must be counted the long vacations of Christmas, Carnival, Easter and summer. The hours of recreation of the community could be used only in exceptional cases. In these six hours it was necessary to find time for the exercises of physical-sensorial education, for the educational hand work, a little music and the elementary school.

It must be considered that since there was no tramway, I was obliged for the sake of economy to arrange things in such a ~~way~~ ^{way} as to keep the cab for only half a day. Thus I could count on the outside helpers in only one session. During the other session the sister and the blind teachers with my help, when I could keep them with me in the hospice, attended chiefly to the teaching of classes, to carrying out the exercises of reading, writing, arithmetic and memory work, according to the agreement which they had with me day by day.

In the other session, preferably the afternoon, because it was longer, active games had the greatest part, alternating with rest on the benches to work with clay, shavings, light wood and other material of the sort, with ^{object} lessons ~~about things~~ and correction of assigned tasks. While the children attended to the work with the help of the assistants, they consulted with the blind teachers and with the sister to have their difficulties explained and get instructions for the next day.

The blind teachers applied themselves little or not at all to the modeling and the games of orientation, as they were no longer of an age to be initiated into these exercises. But they fully understood their value and therefore I could rely on them as good advisers to the assistants. If they could not do these things, they could understand sufficiently whether others did them well or ill, since my standards were not different fundamentally from those which they had obscurely divined and desired to free themselves from the slavery of blindness and of a misunderstanding pity.

There were several persons who came to help me, for whom I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude. They were attracted, in addition to the desire of making themselves useful, by the joyous reception which the children always gave them. Some of them, the most regular, had also understood my need of good angels to help me in this undertaking,

It is not the intention of the author to present a complete history of the world, but to give a general outline of the progress of civilization, and to show the influence of the various nations upon each other. The object of the work is to give a general view of the human mind, and to show the progress of civilization, and to show the influence of the various nations upon each other. The object of the work is to give a general view of the human mind, and to show the progress of civilization, and to show the influence of the various nations upon each other.

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which was so beautiful and so impeded by lack of means, freedom and convinced cooperation.

Not that the sisters were to be blamed excessively. They had neither the indispensable preparation nor the spiritual orientation by which even an uncultivated person can understand and follow.

The old Superior, for example, was genuinely fond of the children. She had real regard for me and after long discussion always ended by yielding, and when she saw the good results she finally felt real satisfaction. But think, at her age, with all those people on her hands, those slight but continual infractions which the life of the community had to undergo, the always imminent danger that a child would be brought to her with its head broken!

Indeed, the games were becoming more daring and complicated. No longer five, but seven, nine, twelve, fifteen, and no longer merely the aqueduct of the Acqua Paola, but the broken stairways^{ways} of the terraces, the steep paths about the belvedere and the great open basins and the hedges of the farm. In short, all the most rugged places became the preferred scene of our games and explorations.

We began to send the girls alone with only the safeguard of one or two watchers armed with a whistle at strategic points, and every now and then a sharp blast stopped all the sheep along a slope, barely in time to prevent one from falling down a precipice. The signal to stop, as I have said, was given very often ^{for} ~~with~~ no other reason than to insure attention and promptness. But if any mother saw these games, she was uneasy. And my good Superior never wearied of repeating that the best hour of the day for her was when she had put all her people to bed. The assistants, even the sister assigned to the work, had grown accustomed to it all and to tell the truth were even

of the fact that the Government has been unable to secure the necessary funds to carry out its policy.

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enthusiastic. But it is certain that after several hours of this close attention they needed and deserved rest.

THE QUESTION OF SPECIAL PERSONNEL IN AN INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND

In an excellent article, Better Selection of Teachers of the Blind, published in the review, *(I Diritti della Scuola)* The Rights of the School August 30, 1920, Carlo Grimandi asks the question, in what respect should the personnel of a good institution for the blind differ essentially from that of any other educational institution? He makes many valuable observations on what might be called the spirit and essence of the question. I recommend the reading of this article to anyone who wishes to search into this subject, and in gleaning it I do not wish to waste the smallest bit. I state the problem here much more superficially, that is, what should be, so to speak, organic in a good institution? This characteristic appears at once, that while in other institutions the first place belongs to the director, the second to the teachers and the third to the assistants, in an institution for the blind it is necessary to abolish the distinction between assistants and teachers.

To teach reading, writing, and the other subjects of the elementary program is a thing which requires indeed knowledge of the special systems in use and a special pedagogy. But the systems can be learned in a few days by an intelligent teacher and even the pedagogy will be much simplified when the pupils have received pre-school preparation and indispensable help out of school. Undoubtedly, if the teachers also are suitably prepared, school and life, instruction and education will harmonize in producing a result much more rapid and satisfactory.

The administration of the Institution for the Blind at Milan tried to start the reform of education with a scholastic method, that is,

substituting for the empiricism hitherto dominating in our schools the standards of scientific pedagogy. But this road is long, because the point of departure is mistaken and the progress which it undoubtedly brings is slight and slow compared with what it would be if the teacher could have a direct influence on the free activity of the pupils, instead of only the few daily hours of school, interrupted by numerous vacations and bound by the exigencies of programs. This is why the compiler of these programs and special methods is forced to declare that "the lack of sight does not permit developing the official programs in the ordinary way and limits of time." (1) And indeed some of our institutions take eight years to complete the elementary course.

I could demonstrate how this method sacrifices the more intelligent pupils and humiliates those of individual aptitude, requiring all to go at the pace of the slowest, or at least of the golden mean. I will refer to only two documents, my experience as a pupil at the institution of Bologna and as director at the Margherita of Savoy Hospice.

I finished the first elementary class in eight months, beginning at the age of five. I had had a good preparation at home and had not been sacrificed by my excellent teacher to my companions. Then I repeated the second class for four years, the third for three, being set apart because I was too young, since the regulations of the institution permitted the pupils to remain till the age of eighteen or twenty and only elementary education was given there. At last, having remained alone in the fourth class, I learned in six months, with lessons three times a week, enough Italian, arithmetic and history to pass a year later the examinations for admission to the fourth class of

(1) Ines Locatelli, Instructions and Programs for Elementary Schools for the Blind. Milan, 1922.

the classical school.

The girls of the Margherita Hospice were able, year after year, to keep up with the examinations for promotion from one elementary class of the public schools to another and before commissions of teachers of the municipality of Rome, with the sole difference that the best got the highest ^{marks} and the lowest had only passing marks. But this was because school was a reward for them and they had been sent there only after the necessary preparation, which might be called home training.

A little girl eight years old, Elena Fazi, entered the hospice on April 8, 1913. She was the daughter of a good family of Roman working people and had been brought up with affection and without acquiring bad habits, so that, though not trained to running and manual skill, her limbs were free and her mind and hand well disposed. I gave most of the time to exercise and manual work. Without effort, with the method of which I shall speak later, at the end of June she had learned to read and write Braille, to compose sentences and short letters, to do the four operations mentally and in writing up to one hundred, and the others items of the program of the first elementary class. So she was promoted to the second class by a commission of teachers of the schools of Rome who came to give the promotion examinations in July.

Renata Barbarroti, seven years old, also of a family of Roman working people, entered the institution in the end of April. More agile in running than the Fazi girl, not at all stiff-jointed from bad up-bringing, she overtook Elena and did even more brilliantly in her examination, being of a livelier nature.

When on the contrary I saw that a child profited little by reading and did not apply herself to it, leaving it to hesitate at games more suitable to her grade of development, such a child was admitted to the

so-called first class only after she had been in the institution for a year or two. But no one, I say no one, ever repeated the first class or the successive ones, simply because they were not admitted prematurely. On the other hand, I have known a number of good teachers whose work has been largely useless because of the lack of cooperation on the part of the personnel acting as extra-scholastic assistants.

The preparation of good assistants is therefore the greatest need of institutions for the blind. And even while we must wait till this preparation can be acquired in some special school, the modification should at once be introduced of entrusting the ordinary assisting of pupils during the hours of study, recreation, meals and walks no longer to incapable persons but to those equipped at least with the normal license.

Nor should this seem too radical a reform. Is it not practised now, at least in part, in boarding- and secondary schools? Now, since no one ever thinks of entrusting these boarding-schools to servants, but to teachers, it seems to me absurd that doing the same thing has not been thought of sooner in regard to the assistants for blind children, whose education is undoubtedly more arduous and delicate, if it is to be fruitful.

The present institutions, however, if they make some attempt to have good teachers, entrust the office of assistant or prefect to young students, who have anything ^{in mind} rather than wasting time with the children, or to infirm old people who make them keep still. Or it happens with them as with an assistant at the institution of Lecce who was to take the boys to the classical school and arrived a quarter of an hour after them.

Some allege the reason of economy. But then it happens that in educating thirty blind instead of twenty they make them maladjusted,

more unhappy than if they were left in absolute ignorance. We must not be under the illusion that an institution for the blind can cost the same as one for normal children or succeed unless it has a selected and large teaching personnel. The education of the blind is principally indemnifying for the sense that is most comprehensive for forming ideas and for orientation. And not only in school must the teaching be almost individual, to let each one touch what the sighted can observe all at once, but much more is it necessary that during recreation, walks, at table, in all the most minute contingencies of daily life, the children shall be continually watched and guided, to enable them to attain a considerable independence and correctness of movement and activity.

As I could not have a specialized personnel, I made up for the quality by the quantity. I profited by the numerous kind persons who came to my assistance, distributing them in turn, so that they would not be too much fatigued and that the children would always be watched by many eyes, especially in the games that involved some danger. When I was able to train some assistants, one was enough instead of two or even three. But with all this, it was necessary to alternate the service frequently, because of the intense effort of energy and attention which it required.

THE COEDUCATION OF THE BLIND WITH THE SIGHTED WOULD BE IDEAL,
BUT IT IS STILL PREMATURE.

Coeducation with the sighted would be ideal for reasons of economy as much as of pedagogy. We should aim at this, approaching it by degrees, little by little, in order to succeed in dissipating the prejudices about blindness and that some good special schools may definitely generalize the standards of our pedagogy.

It seems incredible how quick sighted children are to divine our

condition, our needs and our possibilities. Montessori justly observes that the muscular sense and touch play a much more considerable part in children than in adults, whose visual education leads them rather to forget that touch and the muscular sense were the very educators of the eye. Nothing then is so ill-judged as the impatience and vexation of so many mothers, who remove their children from seeing the blind, lest such a sight sadden them.

Among the most sorrowful memories of my youth is this:- one day I was in a train with some companions from the Institution for the blind of Bologna. We were returning from an excursion to Minerbio. At a station a lady got into our compartment with a little boy, who came close to me and began to play at my knee. The mother pulled him away with an exclamation of terror which chills me to this day. "Don't look at him, he is blind!" The little one, so roughly pulled away, began to cry, and it was not easy for his mother to quiet him. Naturally, she must have been confirmed in her terror, thinking that his angel was weeping because he had seen a blind person.

It is true that children are often astonished at seeing a blind person for the first time, and according to their nature and training they show curiosity or fear, especially if he wears dark spectacles, but it is the matter of a moment. With the mobility and adaptation that are natural to them, it is enough for the blind person to encourage them with a smile or a word for them to become friendly with him at once. They take him by the hand to make him avoid an obstacle or touch a toy, a beautiful flower or a painted figure. They will frequently lose patience a little when he does not understand what they point out to him, but it seems that they are more disposed to attribute this lack of comprehension to thoughtlessness or to a passing chance. "Oh, you don't see!" as if his eyes were blindfolded. And then they

strive to make him understand matters in some other way, if only by describing what they see themselves. (1)

A lady came one day to visit my school bringing her four year old boy. She was an elementary teacher, and aside from the emotional excitement which she felt in duty bound to suffer out of respect for misfortune, she was especially full of anxiety and regret for having brought the child. The latter, however, as soon as he had overcome his first shyness in finding himself among so many strangers in a new place, began to play with the little girls as naturally as possible. Children are in spite of their parents the most objective observers. When a blind child finds himself among sighted children, sometimes the latter get the upper hand because of their superiority in games or contests, but in general they get on perfectly together.

(1) Notice with what tenderness this loving intuition of children about us is expressed by Dr. Giuseppe Tugnoli. He was walking alone through the most crowded streets of the city at Christmas time, when animation and noise, our chief difficulty in orientation, are most intense. A little girl placed herself at his side and without saying a word, taking his hand at moments of danger, was his guide for a long way.

"I did not see into your eyes, and in your voice
 The gentle spirit was not expressed.
 But I understood the light step and the intent look
 And the timid hand guarding me.
 I divined in my heart your bearing,
 Your dark eyes and hair,
 And in your sweet face
 Where childish laughter had died away,
 The feeling of a mother,
 Trembling for her fellow creatures.
 Ah, may your future be blessed,
 Angel coming to him who hesitates on the road.
 May you enjoy delights
 Denied to me, your ward,
 To me, to whom until the day of death
 Remembrance of you will shine
 As my only star."

Besides, blind children are late in discovering that they are not like other people. They have certainly a vague intuition that others possess some extraordinary ability which they lack, but they attribute this to intelligence or good fortune, something which perhaps they too will be able to acquire. They believe anything except that their infirmity is serious and irreparable. So between the one kind of children and the other a relationship something like this is established:- the blind child gives his esteem and admiration and thinks that thus he gains the right to trust and to be satisfied. The sighted child enjoys feeling himself necessary and having a certain importance.

In the institution at Worcester for the well-born blind, some sighted boys who are poor are educated with the others in consideration of their valuable help. Also in the institution for the blind at Lecce I found two orphan girls who are making themselves useful and being very well educated with the blind girls. In the same institution the good practise has been introduced of admitting sighted children to the kindergarten in the proportion of one third of sighted ^{to} ~~and~~ two thirds of blind. The result is so satisfactory for the sighted children also that not all those who apply can be received.

Recently in the Prince of Naples Institution I found a sighted boy who attends with much pleasure as a day pupil the fourth elementary class with the blind boys.

It is necessary, however, to make careful selection. The sighted pupils should be of good disposition and there should not be more than one or two in each group, otherwise they will make common cause among themselves. Such ^{an} education should also be on account of financial or other reasons an advantage to them. I mean material advantage, for the moral one is always present. They become more thoughtful, more on the way to perceiving that happiness, as Manzoni says, is not so much in the good which one finds as in what one makes. Finally it is advisable

for them to be somewhat younger or older than their blind companions. In the first case their visual superiority is balanced by the greater physical development of the others, in the second, one can appeal to the moral qualities of the sighted, as to older brothers to whom younger ones are entrusted.

In reference to this matter, it seems suitable to say something also about the education of blind children in elementary public schools. For the high schools the question is no longer controverted and I shall have occasion to speak of it later. For the elementary schools Dr. Armitage made careful experiments in England before 1890 and came to the conclusion that where it is not possible to have a special school, they can be made use of with fair results. But care should be taken to have a blind teacher visit the schools where there are blind children once or twice a week, to integrate their special teaching, in agreement with the teachers of the classes.

In Italy there have been two notable experiments, one at Bologna, ^{with} ~~for~~ two children admitted to the public kindergarten, (1) and one at Siena, (2) ^{with} ~~for~~ two boys who attended the first elementary classes. I am not speaking of Florence, where blind children since 1915 have attended the public schools above the third class with good results, since if not above the third, at least above the fourth, this should

(1) See my article, The Children Lost in the Park, in the Tribuna, August 14, 1909.

(2) Blind Children in the First Elementary Classes of the Sighted. Reports of Miss Zenobia Boscagli and Miss Tatilda Cipriani, Siena, Ars Educandi, 1913.

The first of the following is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education, and the second is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the office of the Treasurer of the Board of Education.

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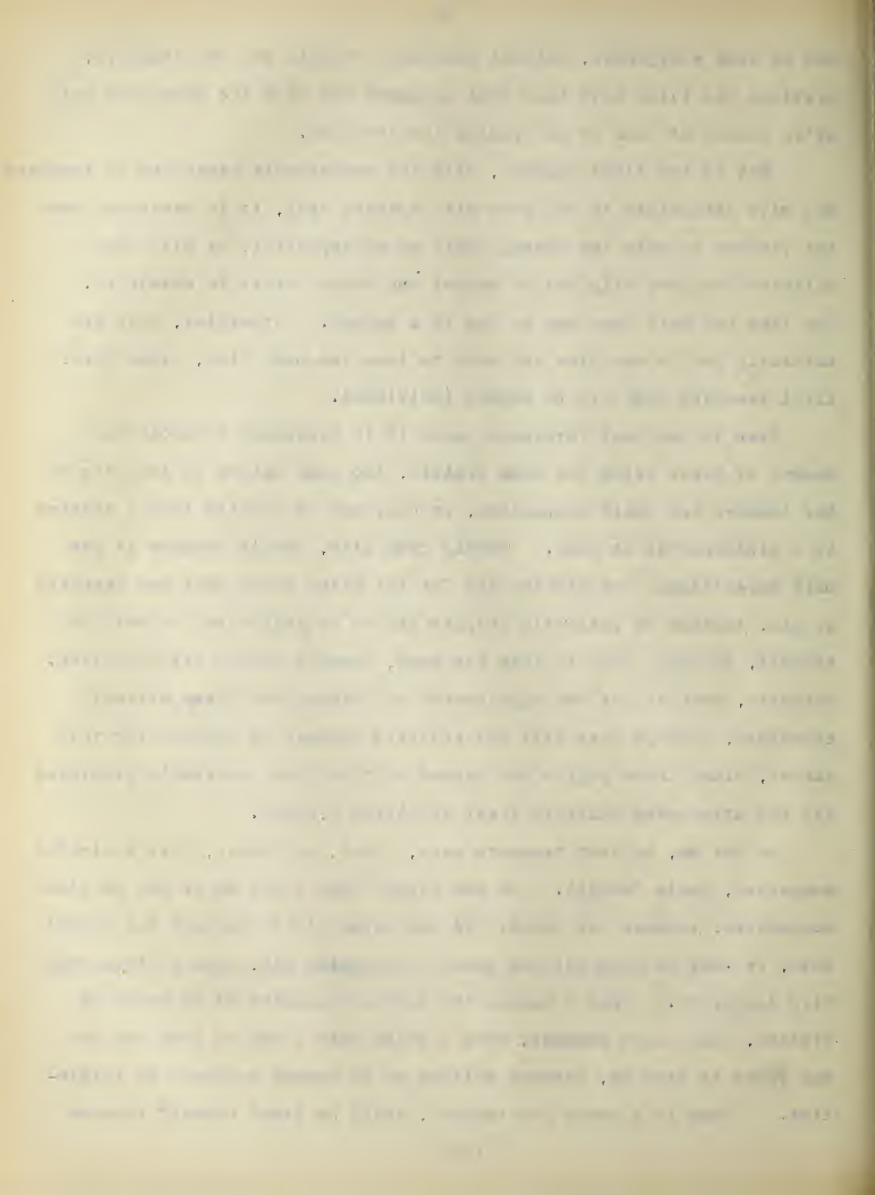
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now be done everywhere, without excessive trouble for the teachers, provided the blind have been well prepared and find the necessary help after school at home or in special institutions.

But in the first classes, with the commendable exception of teachers who give themselves to the work with special zeal, it is desirable for the present to make the attempt only as an expedient, or with rich children who have help out of school and whose talent is developed. And then not more than one or two in a school. Otherwise, they are naturally put to one side and made to lose too much time, since their first teaching ought to be almost individual.

Even in the most favorable cases it is necessary to avoid the danger of their being too much praised, too much helped by the pity of the teacher and their companions, as happened to a child that I entered in a kindergarten in Rome. Partly from pity, partly because it was more expeditious, the sighted did for the blind child what was required of him, instead of patiently helping him to do things very slowly by himself, so that I had to take him away, because he was being spoiled. Moreover, even in the two experiments of Bologna and Vienna already commended, perhaps they will not entirely succeed in eliminating this danger, since those pupils who seemed at that time remarkably promising did not afterwards maintain their brilliant promise.

As for me, my best teachers were, first, my father, then a sighted companion, Dante Tonelli. He was bigger than I and as he had no other companions, because his father did not allow him to go with the street boys, he made me play all the games that suited him, some of them even very dangerous. Then I had as the chosen companion of my games my brother, four years younger, whom I ruled with a rod of iron and who was proud to obey me, because neither of us lacked boldness or initiative. I was in a sense his teacher, until he freed himself because



he had no more need of me. If at boarding-school I was one of the boldest organizers of excursions into the unknown and of undertakings of all kinds among my companions, notwithstanding reproofs and frequent punishments, and the school did not succeed in quelling me, I am sure that the chief credit belongs to these teachers and outside companions.

But in general the coeducation of the blind with ordinary children is premature, either because of the prejudices indicated above or because of the fact not sufficiently noted, that the chief education of the blind is not that given in class, but out of school, in the home, in life, and blindness is especially common among poor and ignorant families. Even parents who are well to do and of good social position through ignorance or too much pity spoil and neglect their blind children. Therefore, except in the case of privileged families, a good school for the blind is inconceivable unless it is residential, where the children at every moment and in every contingency are helped and trained by experienced teachers to organize their free activity.

An institution for the blind therefore should be before all and above all the home that is suitable for them, where the school is carried on in the same place and under the same direction in order to harmonize it more easily with what might be called home training. But the children must be sent to the public schools as soon as they have gained the necessary intellectual and moral maturity. The instruction of each one must be completed in the public schools whatever his rank and purpose. For the blind even more than for others the public school is the best place for adaptation and for passing from the small community of the home or the special boarding-school to the life of the great civil community, with its contests and responsibilities, its demands and satisfactions.

I should have liked to educate the daughters of the porter and the

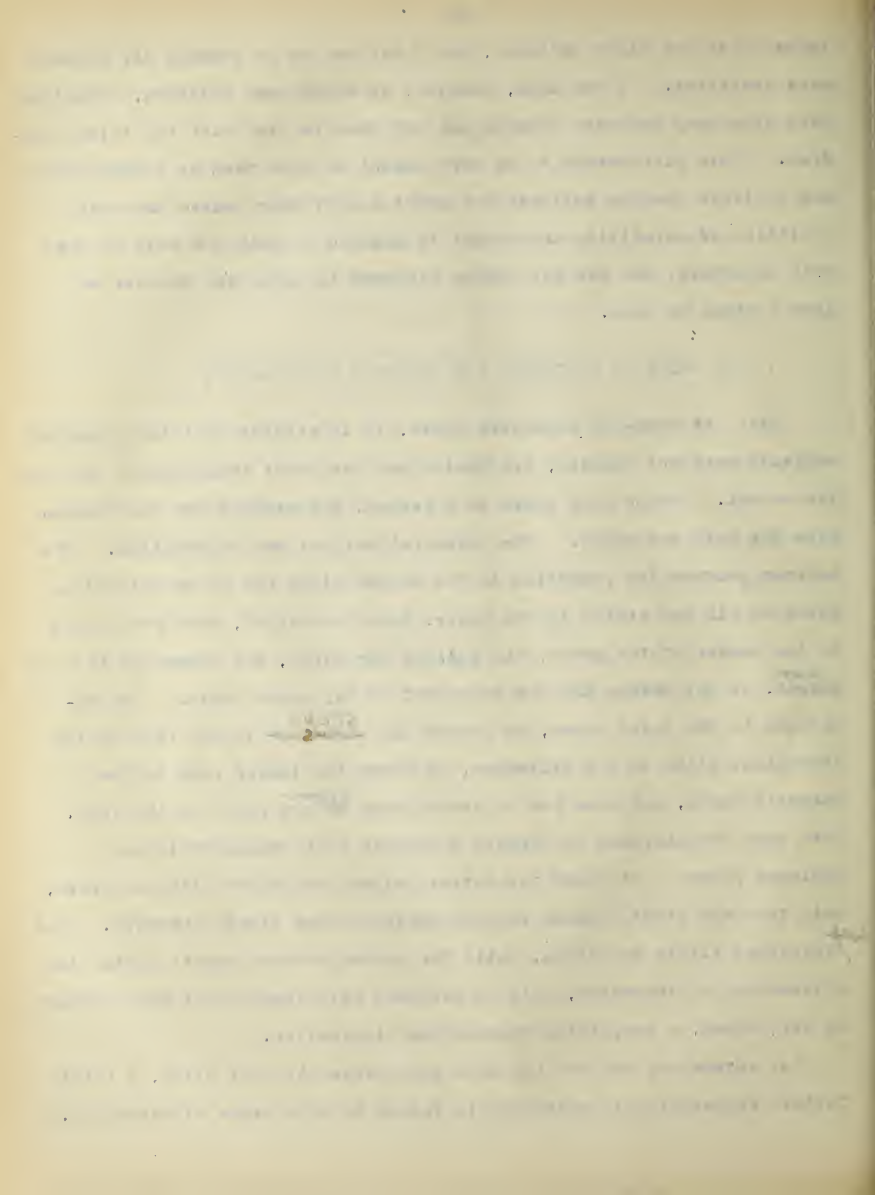
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farmer with the blind children, but I did not do so because the sisters were unwilling. I was able, however, to bring some children, selecting them from many who were offered, and set them to play with the blind children. This plan seemed to me very useful to spur them on to emulation and to train them to estimate how great a gift they lacked and what qualities of amiability they ought to acquire to gain the help of the eyes of others, who are not always disposed to help from impulse or from a sense of duty.

THE SENSE OF OBSTACLES AND AUDITORY LOCALISATION

With the concepts explained above, it is evident that the principal subjects were not reading, arithmetic and the other teachings of the public school. These were given as a reward, and perhaps for that reason also the gain was rapid. The principal subject was orientation. The minimum program for promotion to the second class was to go without a guide on all the stairs in the house, into the chapel, into every part of the garden of the cross, the walk of the girls, the women and the old ~~men~~ ^{men} people, to the meadow and the aqueduct of the Acqua Paola. For admission to the third class, to ascend the ~~stairs~~ ^{steps} in the rear to the fountains, climb to the belvedere, go along the inside path to the farmer's house, and know how to return home ~~to~~ ^{from} any point on the farm. Then came the exercise of finding a teacher or a companion in an assigned place. At first the latter helped the seeker with her voice, only that she might succeed in approaching in the right direction. The ~~help~~ ^{help} diminished little by little, until the person who was sought waited in silence to be discovered, with no auditory help except what was produced by her person, a completely unaccustomed indication.

For anyone who has not had much experience with the blind, I think further explanation is necessary in regard to this sense of obstacles.



If in a room that one knows any piece of furniture is taken away or added or if its place is merely changed, the resonance is changed. Even those who have sight can easily make the experiment. Provided the room is not too large or too full of furniture, one can even notice the difference in sound produced by the presence of one or two persons.

I remember that as a boy I experienced a singular pleasure in staying in the chapel of the institution when it was empty, to meditate alone in that mystic silence. As soon as I had entered, I perceived by the sound of my feet or a slight cough which I gave on purpose to test the resonance, whether anyone was there, and in that case I made a brief pause and went out. Sometimes, not infrequently, however, I was mistaken, if ~~any~~^{some} one was in a corner, by a curtain, or between two columns, in such a way as to be confused with these objects, so that the comprehensive acoustic wave which resulted was little modified. On entering a room to talk alone with one person, it is not rare for a blind man to perceive the presence of a third. It is less easy to notice the fourth among three and the fifth among four, according to the well known law of Fechner.

The laws of acoustics are in substance analogous to those of optics, and as vision depends upon the reflection of shining rays, conveniently interpreted by the data of touch and by practise, there ought to be no difficulty in admitting the perception of obstacles and even of forms by means of hearing, although within much narrower limits through the much coarser surrounding medium in which the acoustic wave is propagated. (1)

(1) Cf. my article, The Hearing of Forms, in the Corriere della Sera, September 16, 1909.

I thought therefore that if the blind succeed spontaneously in localizing by means of hearing, gradual and frequent practise ought to increase this faculty. Funz also, who made many studies on this subject observes, as he could not fail to do, the progress which the sense of obstacles acquired with exercise, Dafur likewise. But attention can be intensified ~~with exercise~~ only with play, since all these changing functions of the senses are very tiring and troublesome when they are performed systematically and with the intention of study.

Expectant attention disturbs judgment, confusing or actually exchanging the real for the imaginary. This is so true that at the moments when we give our greatest voluntary attention we are most likely to stumble against things, to mistake direction, to mistake a curtain for a person. "Fireflies for lanterns," says the common proverb. So you must have often noticed that a blind man, animated by conversation, continues to talk with a person who has gone away, while he calmly holds his hand firm to take a bottle, a cap, a chair, located by hearing, sometimes even a metre away. If we notice that we are being observed, then a mistake is almost certain. If it does not occur, it costs a great effort to repress our agitation and steer ourselves by force of will, like one who navigates against the current.

It should be noted once for all that I do not consider it important to make subtle distinctions between the sense of hearing and the sense of the impression of the air on the uncovered parts of the face, to which Mark Funz, with long and patient studies, would attribute chiefly the sense of obstacles. Funz notes that some persons without hearing have just the same sense of obstacles and he believes that on this ground he can establish the central proof of his affirmation. I do not doubt it, but it is certain that for anyone who possesses ~~shix~~ hearing this sense ^{plays} ~~has~~ a most important part and

The first of these is the fact that the United States is a
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is of longer range. In practise, however, a sharp distinction between the various sensorial fields seems to me neither possible nor useful. (1)

GAMES OF LOCALIZATION

For these reasons, in addition to the active games indicated above, we found certain games expressly for the localization of obstacles very useful. Something of this kind had already been done in the assault on the fortress, since the attackers had to find the exact position of the sentinels. But the meadow/ deadens sound too much and a blind person loses his way there very easily.

On the other hand, a place excellently adapted for games of localization was the passageway which joins the Casale to the chapel. Devoid of furniture, it made a long acoustic tube. One wall was perfectly smooth, covered with cement, so that one could run along it with the greatest security and even while running notice if an obstacle was near. On the other wall were pillars, broad but not very thick, which rose from a socle, at one end almost a metre high and going down to a few centimetres at the other. Between the pillars, the walls formed ^{recesses} ~~compartments~~, which increased the resonance and served as hiding places for anyone who climbed on the low wall of the socle and stood against

(1) Cf. the second chapter of my Introduction to the Education of the Blind and the important report of Funz at the Fifth International Congress at Naples, 1909, Italian translation in the acts of the same congress. Cf. also Colucci in Review of Psychology, 1911-12. (Rivista di Tiflogia). The new studies on paroptic vision seem destined to throw greater light on these arguments.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the proposed plan for the establishment of a new department of the University, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours very truly,
JOHN D. COVILLE, President

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

a pillar.

Here was played the game of the patrol and the thieves. It began in this way:- the patrol walked along the regular wall and had to identify the thieves, who stood in silence along the smooth wall. Then it passed into a more complicated and amusing form. The patrol walked along the smooth wall at a greater or less distance, as the director of the game, judging their ability, ordered. The thieves hid along the other wall.

The children were made to wear very light sandals and shoes instead of the heavy stiff nailed shoes which decrease the sensibility of the soles of the feet and make their movement noisy. This matter, which may have a secondary importance for those who see, has a capital one for us. The most certain signs for a blind man who goes outdoors are perhaps those indicated by the touch of the soles of the feet. Little hollows and gentle slopes, the varying roughened surface of a pavement, serve frequently to determine a position. For example, I live at present two and a half kilometres from Lanciano, in a street called Santa Giusta. The national road ascends with an almost imperceptible rise till it is near three crosses called the Calvary. From here a narrow street goes off at an acute angle with the principal road, which continues increasing the slope, while to enter the narrow street one must ascend the slight rise made by a small bridge. I start to walk from Lanciano inattentive, frequently thinking or reading, and my foot stops almost infallibly at the greater slope of the road, warning me to keep to the left and get into my path. If sometimes the inattention is excessive and I push on too far beyond the main road, the more rapid slope warns me very quickly and I turn on my steps.

Another difficulty which only the foot solves when the hedge perceptible to hearing is lacking or is separated by a ditch is that

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1. The first step in the process of the investigation is the identification of the subject. This is done by the investigator who is assigned to the case. The investigator will first identify the subject by the name of the person who is the subject of the investigation. This is done by the investigator who is assigned to the case. The investigator will first identify the subject by the name of the person who is the subject of the investigation. This is done by the investigator who is assigned to the case.

rapid slope gave me very quickly and I took my place. The road is extensive and I turn on too far beyond the main road, the more to keep to the left and my wife to the right. If sometimes the road-ways almost entirely of the gravel along the road, within the slope almost insensible, I suddenly thinking of reading, and my last word indeed the right side of a small bridge. I start to walk continues insensible the slope, with no other the narrow road, which narrow street goes off at an acute angle with the principal road, which view still it is near three corners called the Calvary. The road is a gentle slope. The national road branches with an almost imperceptible descent two and a half kilometers from Barcelona, in a street called serve frequently to determine a position. For example, I live at perhaps these indicated by the touch of the sides of the feet. Little for us. The most certain sign for a blind man who goes outdoors are at have a secondary importance for those who see, but a capital one point of the left and with their movement noise. This noise, when of the heavy shift noise comes when decreases the sensitivity of the children were made to wear tiny light sandals and shoes instead

Another difficulty which only the tool solves when the basis

of ~~not~~ going too close to the edges of the road, marked by grassy or less worn ground. It is true that a ditch of some depth can also be noticed by hearing, but this requires much attention and is more difficulty for anyone who is tall. The signals of the foot are more to be heeded, also because they are the only valuable ones on windy days. So it is true that the only insuperable obstacle for a blind man is to walk alone on ground covered with snow.

Our thieves then walked on their toes along the irregular wall of the passageway, taking advantage of the pillars to hide better when the patrol drew near. The latter could ^{not} violate a dwelling and go to search for the thief who was not there. So they had to approach softly and seize him with a sure movement, making for him as soon as they had located him. Sometimes the thieves grew insolent and made noises behind the patrol or came close enough to them to touch their dress. Then the game changed into a lively race.

A variation of this game was the castle with seven walls. Seven children, more or less, it makes little difference, stood guarding each one her own line. They were allowed to move only at right angles to the walls. The others tried to pass one after the other until the entire field had been penetrated to the last defence.

The game of the challenge and the prisoners. This game used in a wider and freer field the habit of localizing and the agility gained in active games. It was played in the broad shaded path parallel to the passageway. The girls were divided into two camps and two persons or two objects large enough, ^{whose} the height of ~~which~~ reached almost to one's face, marked the boundary. The two files were lined up opposite at a certain distance and behind them stood the less robust forces appointed to guard the prisoners. A girl cried the name of the opponent whom she wished to challenge and advanced unmolested to strike her hand on the palm which the one who was challenged ^{extended} held out without

to be made since the ground covered with water.

[illegible]

1. A revision of this form was the castle with seven walls. 1970
delivered. 1971 OT 1970. It was a little different. 1970 1970 1970
one day was like. They were allowed to move with the right motion to
the walls. The castle was to have one with a right motion to
the walls. This has been corrected to the last sentence.

[illegible]

leaving the line. But as soon as the blow was given the challenger had to run and her opponent to pursue her. If she touched her before reaching the boundary of the camp, she made ^{the challenger} her prisoner, but if in running she did not stop at the boundary, she remained a prisoner in the opposite camp. Also anyone was a prisoner who ran into the persons or objects placed to indicate the boundary of the camp.

When the first prisoners were made, the best part of the game began. For while a pair gave the challenge noisily, the others went in silence a long way round, to arrive unnoticed at the rear of the enemy camp, take the prisoners ready for flight by the hand and drag them back, if the guards did not succeed in blocking the passage. This game summed up in a sense all the preceding ones, requiring running, wariness, astuteness, localization of obstacles, walking with caution and agility. Naturally it was a difficult game which at first needed much help from the teachers and the director. The latter, not having sight, was the fittest to arouse emulation, to judge the difficulties and to suggest expedients. Then it became one of the most delightful games and was played usually as a reward.

The game of the halfpenny. This game aroused much interest in visitors and much enthusiasm among the pupils. It was usually played in the passageway, but it could also be carried on in the hall of the school to amuse the pupils between classes. A coin was thrown and the children had to pick it up in turn. It was thrown first a short distance, then the throw was lengthened by degrees. Not more than one or two girls were called at a time, because in greater numbers they would be confused and would get in each other's way. It was a good plan therefore to divide them into small groups according to classes and odd moments were given to the game.

The easiest way was to make the coin roll, because the children

followed its path by the sound, and this was another way of training them to run lightly. The cleverest, on the contrary, waited till the coin ceased to roll, then they began to run and stopped at the point where they had located the stopping of the sound. A more difficult way of throwing was to toss the coin without making it roll.

This exercise was also useful in accustoming them to find an object that had fallen to the ground without asking the help of a sighted person. They were to soil their hands as little as possible by merely grazing the floor, not rubbing it, and to search in an orderly way, so as not to turn about vainly in the same place. Anyone who rubbed or got too far from the goal was called back by the teacher and lost a point. Anyone who hesitated got only half a point. In a similar way they played ninepins. In the most elementary stage a girl stood by the ninepins to indicate the distance and direction. Little by little they succeeded in determining both of these, setting out from the ninepins and trusting to their muscular memory of the way they had made. I have heard in Romagna recollections of some famous blind player of bowls.

We thought also of substituting a larger disk for the coins. This would have been reasonable from the standpoint of teaching, especially at the beginning, but a penny amused them more, perhaps because it was more ordinary. Children always prefer to use common objects, even as teaching material. "Who has a penny piece?" "Here's one," and the game was ready. The use of coins served also in training to distinguish them by the sound.

I will not digress to recount the variations of these fundamental games, because the teachers were permitted to introduce them and they were strongly advised to do so, for the reasons explained above.

...the fact that the ... was ...

This evidence was also useful in determining when the time of
 object that had fallen in the ground without leaving the help of a
 witness present. They were to call their names in their own presence
 by merely crossing the lines, notwithstanding that no person in an
 actually way, no one was to have about riding in the same place. They
 was taken in fact for the time the group was called down by the
 witness and that a point. Anyone who believed not to be a being
 in a similar way that listed evidence. In the most elementary sense
 a girl stood up the evidence to indicate the direction and direction
 lines of lines they succeeded in testifying that of their, nothing
 was then the evidence was testimony as their testimony of the day
 they had come. I have made in certain conditions of some things
 and things of people.

[illegible]

Although advised to do so, the witness explained above, that because the records were destroyed, it was not possible to determine the location of the records.

THE EDUCATION OF THE HAND

I do not tire of repeating that the last concern of teachers of the blind ought to be elementary instruction strictly so called. After physical exercise the important subject of teaching and examination was the training of the hand to touch and mould with the practical aim of forming concrete ideas and representing them, preparing thus also in the best way for manual work.

To work with clay with some effect, superior to the very elementary exercises of which I have spoken above, I understood that it was useful to permit and alternate games with more solid material. For this purpose I got numerous regular wooden prisms of various sizes with which the children constructed pavements, rooms, boxes, towers. Then they began to make, for example, the rectangle of the school hall with prisms built up to indicate the walls, leaving spaces for the doors and windows. In the middle of the rectangle they placed smaller prisms to indicate the teacher's desk, the benches, the bookshelves, each piece of furniture in the position corresponding to the real one and approximately proportionate in size. The children proceeded very slowly and inaccurately in these analogies of position and measure. They did not think twice about representing the desk with a prism smaller than that employed to indicate the chair and putting on its side the one which ought to stand upright. The value of these exercises and the need of grading them proved all the greater, to correct inaccuracies and fill in the gaps of each pupil's imagination. It frequently happened too that someone insisted with keen interest on some detail of no importance, neglecting or distorting the essential elements.

One of the greatest difficulties of teachers of the blind is this

It is not the first time of repeating that the last concern of teachers of
 the blind ought to be elementary instruction entirely as a child.
 After appropriate practice the important subject of teaching and examina-
 tion was the training of the hand to touch and write with the fingers
 and of forming domestic habits and responsibilities. These, repeating them
 also in the last way for manual work.

To work with clay with some effect, together to the very elementary
 exercises of which I have spoken above. I understood that it was useful
 to permit the children to work with some solid material. For this
 purpose I got numerous wooden blocks of various sizes with which
 the children could handle themselves, to make, to write, to draw, to
 learn to write, for example, the practice of the school with writing
 only up to the middle of the table, leaving space for the house and windows.
 In the middle of the table they placed smaller pieces to indicate
 the teacher's desk, the benches, the bookshelves, each piece of furniture
 in the position corresponding to the real one and approximately propor-
 tionate in size. The children practiced very slowly and inaccurately
 in their exercises of position and movement. They did not learn to
 stand representing the desk with a piece smaller than they employed to
 indicate the house and writing on the side the one which ought to stand
 against. The value of these exercises and the need of making them
 grows all the greater, as correct instruction and skill in the use
 of each child's individuality. It frequently happened too that movements
 indicated with great interest in some detail of no importance, but
 in directing the essential elements.

One of the greatest difficulties of teachers of the blind is this

very training them to distinguish the essential from the accidental. Often an ornament, a superfluous detail, distracts them and makes them lose the idea of the whole.

When they had sufficiently mastered the idea of one room as a whole, they advanced to constructing adjacent rectangles to represent the adjoining rooms, in order to reach the point of reproducing an entire wing of the building with the corresponding subdivisions.

Besides the advantage of giving the idea of a whole, there was also in these exercises that of handling the blocks without misplacing them. Building prisms in the shape of towers and pedestals, which grew very slowly, served for this purpose. On top was sometimes placed a puppet of clay or a long narrow block after the manner of an obelisk, until an earthquake made everything collapse.

We used in part the Montessori exercises, putting cylinders of different sizes into corresponding holes, buttoning bands, and so forth. But our interest, rather than to train in distinguishing sizes, forms and weights, was to promote forming ideas of a whole and of analogies and to train in handling and constructing. With this material marches and processions were formed also. Parallelepipeds were placed upright like men and were made to advance by twos or fours. Little by little the children managed small solid objects, until they could mobilize less stable ones, such as pebbles or fruit stones. We also made much use of small sticks ^{and} ~~xx~~ wires, putting them together with ~~xxii~~ rings and corks, the ordinary material used by other children.

With these means it became more instinctive to represent different floors one above the other and draw analogies between the parts of a piece of furniture or those of a building. Boxes of inexpensive toys are also useful, representing furniture, houses that can be taken

very clearly from its distinctive appearance and its position in the neighborhood.

When they had sufficiently searched the area of the room and the whole, they advanced in searching the adjacent room to the right of the main room. In order to reach the point of searching the adjacent room, they had to pass through the doorway of the main room. When they had sufficiently searched the area of the room and the whole, they advanced in searching the adjacent room to the right of the main room. In order to reach the point of searching the adjacent room, they had to pass through the doorway of the main room.

[illegible]

It was in part the enormous quantity of material which was sent to the different places in the country, and the fact that the material was sent in such a haphazard manner, that the Government was unable to keep track of the material sent to the different places in the country.

The above information was obtained from the files of the Department of Defense, Office of the Inspector General, Washington, D.C., and is being furnished to you for your information.

apart and also ornaments such as columns, capitals, arches and cornices.

We used besides certain small cardboard boxes with a double bottom, the upper one with little round holes in a line in which designs were to be made with balls of different colors. Of course the colors were of no use to us. But the balls, which went into the holes with a little cap, were not very firm and required a light touch and nice handling. These boxes were bought for a few pennies in the bazaars.

Other material bought at the bazar which served us well consisted of figures made of small notched pieces of wood, which had to be ^{inserted} ~~be fitted~~ one into another in certain required ways, so as to fit and form various designs. Here again the color was mute for us, but the game of patience had perhaps a greater educational importance. A composite figure was presented, so that a child had it ^{well} impressed on her memory. Then it was taken apart and had to be put together again, according to the requirements of the engravings.

With ^{the} same idea, drawing inspiration from the Montessori method, I afterwards had ^{carved} the alphabet cut on tablets and letters cut out of copper or cardboard which fitted into these incisions. Thus the children learned, playing, all the small and capital letters of common writing. Then, still playing, they were trained to reproduce them in clay or with string or to make them with dots, as I shall tell later.

Incised marks are much more difficult to perceive by touch, because the finger must go along the hollow investigating, while relief stands out and of itself guides attention. Therefore the reading of a stone tablet requires large letters, much larger than those which can be read in relief on glass bottles. At the same time the incised marks are more easily impressed on the muscular memory, and after the finger

There was a small room at the rear of the building, which was used as a storage room for the various items of clothing and other articles which were found in the building. This room was also used for the storage of the various items of clothing and other articles which were found in the building.

has followed them a few times it can reproduce them more faithfully. So from productions in plastic work or relief it was possible to advance to giving the children a pencil with which to ^{trace} ~~form~~ letters and elementary geometric figures with only the muscular memory for guide.

You, readers accustomed to write, can make the test with eyes closed. And if you will take the precaution of resting the little finger on a ruler, to go straight, you will see that your penmanship will not be very different from usual, just because the muscular habit is automatic, since each one has his own graphic physiognomy, his own handwriting.

Adults who become blind are able to continue to write freehand with only the aid of a hand guide to keep the direction. The mistake which they make in general, in time, is to write too small and crowd the letters together, unless they are warned to react somewhat and exaggerate in the opposite direction. By relying on this muscular ^{security} ~~memory~~ it has been possible to give to some war blind the work of registering the complaints of telephone subscribers in Rome. They write each complaint with a pencil on a slip which goes to the workmen in charge of repairs.

But it will be more convenient to speak of writing in its own place. We are now able to treat adequately of plastic art, the attempts at which I touched on in the first chapter.

PLASTIC ART AND MODELS

The step from constructing forms with pieces put together to modeling in clay becomes obvious and gradual. The clay is more ductile, more faithful to the intention of the hand. Frequently there were bizarre productions, in which the accessories had a disproportionate part. But they responded to a need and found a check and point of reference in the solid objects handled before. The children no longer made sweetmeats and fruit, but bricks, columns, tables, footstools,

boxes, equipped as needed with wires. These were to represent more or less closely rooms and houses with openings on all sides to indicate doors and windows. There were blocks cut in the shape of stairs, on the sides of which it was extremely important to the girls that the banisters should not be lacking. They strove to make these with wooden toothpicks or wire and they employed the wooden prisms already noted to prop the constructions. All the material that they had at hand was put to use.

Of course at first they had to be helped and advised a great deal, as I have said above, but then they became enthusiastic and intensely eager to improve by themselves. A layer of clay spread on the table with hollows and rises represented a field with stones and ditches, or a path with seats and trees. And finally imagination and boldness urged them on to represent in a sort of high relief the inner courtyard with the cistern in the middle and the three surrounding wings of the building, or the terraces in the rear with the relative stairways and fountains. The garden of the cross, for example, a rectangle with its edges raised, the walls; two furrows cut in the form of a cross, the paths; at the end two small cubes opposite each other, the porter's house and the chapel; and two or three toothpicks placed upright on the edge of the rectangle between the two cubes, the entrance gate.

However primitive these productions were, the important thing was to have arrived at the certainty that the pupils now had a conception, even though an embryonic one, of the ensemble of parts much broader than the reach of their arms. These parts were now put together in habitual and spontaneous synthesis by means of muscular and auditory memory, because they felt the desire ^{to} of representing them, ^{in some way.} ~~as matter of~~

Pierre Villy writes:- "The teachers in our special schools have

noticed that the reproductions of animals in actual size remain most frequently unused. They are not touched or they are touched badly. Reproductions are required which the hand can grasp easily. On the other hand, it will be necessary to have enlarged models to give exact images of flowers, insects, etc." (1) I agree without reserve as to the second part. Tactile perception can be exercised only on objects of a certain size and firmness. But as to not considering it useful to have the blind touch animals and objects of actual size, as far as it is possible without danger, I think this is a serious mistake. It is rooted in the belief that an essential part of the psychology of the blind is timidity and laziness in touching in length and breadth, extending the arms in every direction and utilizing also the movements of the body, timidity and laziness of which I have already spoken.

But as appetite comes from eating, the blind, excited by exercise, finally become more and more enthusiastic over it. So when cured of stiffness of the tactile and muscular sense, they feel with intelligence even objects of great bulk, revelling around them, using the hands and the body. They even venture to touch a ^{live} horse or an ox, provided they are reassured by knowing them to be gentle. Aeneas's horse, if he were still alive, could bear witness to this.

Aeneas was my cab driver. The girls never asked him to drive them in the cab, but it was the greatest favor to be allowed to touch the horse. I could cite also many examples of recollections of my childhood and of my schoolmates. We had no models of animals, large or small, but we conceived the idea by ourselves of knowing them in real life, and we

(1) Op. cit., p. 70.

collected that the representations are similar to those of the living world. The
 possible manner. They are not learned as the living world is. The
 distinction are realized which the living world is. The
 means, it will be necessary to have sufficient means to give them
 of knowledge, insight, etc. If I cannot without anxiety be to the
 part. The living world can be represented only in objects of a certain
 also and time. But as to not considering it useful to have the
 living world animals and objects of natural view, as the living world is
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 belief that an essential part of the psychology of the living world is
 and lastly in learning to know and to know, therefore the living world
 every distinction and realizing also the importance of the living world.
 and lastly of which I have always spoken.
 but the living world is from living world, which is necessary,
 finally seems more and more extraordinary over it. In which world of
 existence of the living world and knowledge, they feel with intelligence
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 and knowledge of living world as we see. The living world, it is the
 living world, living world as we see.
 living world as we see. The living world as we see in living world
 in the end, but it has the living world as we see in living world
 power. I could also give examples of representations of the living world
 and of the living world. We had no living world as we see, but
 we considered the living world as we see in living world, and the

took advantage of every opportunity with more or less prudent boldness.

I can give assurance that I went to the secondary school without any other ideas of horses, donkeys or oxen than those which I had formed from feeling or riding live ones. And indeed I was never embarrassed in distinguishing a horse or donkey of paper maché when the occasion arose. The girls of the Margherita Hospice also freely made reproductions of furniture or animals of which they did not have the reduced model.

Certainly an exact idea is formed by models, because they can be perceived with fewer movements and with the shortest extension of the hand. But the reduced models are too cold, too artificial, if the desire to touch them has not come from contact with the living animals, or at least from a model of actual size, or if at least such contact has not existed before in the imagination, as the reward and the final check of that scholastic knowledge.

The real object, or failing this, a model as nearly as possible of actual size, ought to be shown first and afterwards the one in reduced proportions. First, to excite interest, afterwards to accomplish successfully that transition ~~that transition~~ to which till now our teachers have paid no attention:- from touching with movements of both hands to larger syntheses, which can be formed by means of muscular memory, coordinating the successive positions of the body. Theoretically, the greatest scope of our perceptions is that of our two arms held wide. But this perception is only immediate and can be had with a single synchronizing perceptive act. The distance of a metre and a half is written, so to speak, in the recollection of spreading the arms apart. But peasants and geometers make ^{only} slight errors in measuring the length of an enclosure with paces.

If the comparison makes it clear, I would say that the memory of the successive positions of the body is to those of the arms as lenses are to the naked eye, except that the lenses, adjusted by the optician, give constant magnifying, while the movements of the body must from time to time be proportioned by the subject. Hearing, which by itself gives inaccurate and false sensations of distances and spatial relations, when coordinated with the muscular memory of shifting movements, becomes a valuable auxiliary.

Why then should we be limited to the education of simultaneous touch and not proceed, of course in its own time, to making use of successive movements? The synthesis is more complex but not different in nature. The games of localization of which I have already spoken then become valuable auxiliaries in the education of the muscular sense also and in the formation of those larger syntheses through successive movements which are as necessary to the blind as the narrower natural synthesis of synchronous touch within reach of the compass of the arms.

It is true, as our teachers have observed, that models in reduced proportions are very useful, but for another reason. This is to accustom the children to discriminate between the essential and the incidental and to train them to make objects and places ^{larger} ~~smaller~~ or ^{smaller} ~~larger~~ in imagination, preserving intact the proportion of the parts, an exercise which the eye does spontaneously by adapting the visual apparatus to distances. A body in fact is seen in different degrees of size according to the degree of the distance. The blind man can hardly have an idea of this by analogy of sounds, which grow weaker as they become distant. It is necessary therefore to give them very frequent opportunities to compare forms that differ only in size. And as I did not have the money, and perhaps it was not worth while to waste it on

a large educational museum, I found it more convenient to take the children of the hospice to the bazaars or the public museums, making it possible through courtesy or a small fee for them to touch stuffed animals and reproductions in various sizes of statues, monuments, machines and a little of everything.

#The teaching of plastic art is not different from that of constructing with solids or wire, and rather than a subject apart ought to be considered as a mere variation and perfecting of the former, to educate the hand and the muscular sense in general. Two things must be kept in mind:- first, that our ideas and productions become exact and fixed in the memory only as the sensorial stimuli are transformed into motor activity, a fact which is being constantly further verified by psychologists. Second, that these productions, to which the pupil must come not through obedience but from habit and a psychological need, like that of language, furnish the teacher the best means of control and correction of the inexactness of the concrete ideas of the blind.

With these means, after they had understood as much as possible and had visited museums with guides able to describe and to arouse duly the greatest sensations possible and had touched models, our children reached the point of reproducing monuments such as the Temple of Vesta, the Piazza del Popolo and a triumphal arch. I cite these because since they turned out to be somewhat intelligible, they remained a long time in a glass case ad perpetuam rei memoriam. They also figure in a little collection of photographs taken by Mr. Sante Luccardi, a lawyer, a director of the hospice, on one of his visits.

I disliked allowing photographs to be taken, because the public too easily misunderstands the aim of these exercises and sometimes cries out at the miracle, thus showing the compassionate opinion that it has of the blind, if it wonders at so small a thing. On the other hand it has a

sense of grief or a bitter smile no less unjust, because it looks for an aesthetic element where this cannot and ought not to be sought.

Another thing which disturbed me and frequently also made me lose patience was when the assistants put their hands on the girls' work to give it that little touch which made it aesthetic. "Hardly a touch," they assured me, but that was just what they should not have given.

The pupils who were most agile and liveliest in running and localization succeeded also in doing more accurate modeling, sometimes to the point of giving a certain expression to their animals and harmony of form to their furniture and houses. These were Palmira Di Meo, Assunta Amati and Elena Fazi. Anita was famous for her magnificent undertakings, but as in games she was too fond of "Let us arm ourselves, and you go," so in modeling she was inclined to get help from the teachers very cleverly.

During the first days of my visits to the hospice I took the children a rubber dog, cat, elephant and horse. The elephant was quickly identified by his trunk and thickset shape in contrast with the horse, which was of the same size. The difficulty was to distinguish between the dog and the cat, and I asked the sister to explain the characteristic differences of structure. Soon afterwards Anita informed me that she understood very well and recognized them at once without ever being mistaken. But I became suspicious and taking the two animals I held them out to her in such a way that she could not touch their tails. She had noticed that the cat had its tail upright, and that was all she knew. I remembered certain little rough places, noticed only by myself, by which I choose quickly between the solid figures of wood ^{with} which my teacher taught me to distinguish,

the decahedron, the dodecahedron, and the icosahedron.

Be on guard then, teachers of the blind, against the incidental details of the models which you exhibit, and also of the originals. For even a live kitten and a dog are differentiated so easily by touching the skin that without any sufficient reason one can be free to ignore the rest. This is another reason for modeling. Then one feels the need for knowing more, and if he has not paid attention to the living animal, he at once seeks the copy. And after this the animal becomes the same cause of greater curiosity and more minute analysis, as the idea seeks the work to express itself and is thereby more clarified and deepened.

And now it is in order to speak of another branch of teaching, which wrongly is not given in schools for the blind or is given badly or very little - the teaching of drawing.

DRAWING AND THE EDUCATION OF THE MUSCULAR SENSE TO ASSEMBLE THE CHARACTERISTIC DETAILS OF FORMS

We say, "embrace with a look," "grasp the likeness," "assemble the whole." Embrace, grasp, assemble are terms taken from the muscular and tactile sense and testify that by ^{se}the/humble senses the eye was educated. But the eye, educated by them, surpasses them very quickly in acumen, quickness and synthesis. Five hundred thousand rods function simultaneously stimulated by the vibrating ether and in each one of them are joined countless simpler sensations with an incalculable complex. In such multiciplidty there are naturally grouped in the perceptive process the most salient lines, the essential features, the outlines which are put into the drawing.

I have already told how the children often did not recognize a cup or other common object merely because they were confused by the ornamentation

and the details. So touch frequently delays over a detail, all the more because the blind often have the same timidity and laziness in touching in length and breadth as they have in running. This is why it above all necessary to stimulate them to touch and to construct with objects which unless they are touched lightly at once give the noisy confirmation of being upset.

That sense of touch at a distance which Kunz has so accurately determined and which physiologists are now agreed in admitting for the features of the face ought to exist also in an appreciable degree for the hand. It often seems to me that I possess it and other blind persons think the same. It is certain that my pupils, either by this sense or by a refinement of the muscular sense, or by both together, turned about with hands outstretched, lightly touching the tops of their constructions, adding to or taking away from them without spoiling them. After they had gained this prudent confidence they were no longer afraid to venture to touch fragile and complicated objects, even to examine flowers and ribbons without displacing them.

A thing which still causes great wonder to many people is how the blind find out the hour and minute, lightly touching the hands of the clock, even the second hand, without stopping it or retarding the movement. For this purpose raised numbers or dots on the ^{clock-}face are not necessary. As a fixed point of reference the base of the clock is sufficient. The determining of the time results from the angle which the hands form with the base and with each other. For example, the hour hand diametrically opposite the base and the minute hand at a right angle on the right of the one who is looking indicate a quarter past six. The minute hand descending about thirty degrees indicates twenty minutes past six, sixty degrees, twenty-five minutes, and so forth.

But to touch advantageously it is necessary to have previously some kind of plan of investigation, according to the elements speedily supplied in the expectant attention. It may seem that I am saying mechanical things, but the process of visual perception, if more rapid, is not different or less complex. A little nephew of mine, seeing a bracelet, called it a doughnut. The first time that a bunch of grapes was brought to the table he began to cry joyfully, "Marbles!" Every perception is the result of successive hypotheses, more or less conscious, more or less shortened and gained at a bound. Thus poetry derives motives often full of suggestion, like the description of the approach of the angel in the first canto of the Purgatorio or of the mystic rose, at the end of the Paradise.

The blind ought to proceed much more slowly and diligently to understand how to select the useful elements in the midst of the collection which touch presents to them analytically and without shading. Optic images are like beautiful finished photographs, tactile ones like bits of mosaic which the diligent imagination must put together by itself. That very ingenious process still unfortunately so slow and difficult which has succeeded in transmitting photographs to a distance can give an idea of our wearisome work in constructing mentally the data which we deduce from grasping and embracing, literally, with our hands and with holding in our memory the successive movements of our arms and bodies. It is most unfortunate if a keen intuition and those forms of imagination which psychologists call integrating ~~and~~ do not assist. It is exactly these forms of imagination that are educated by means of modeling and ~~designing~~ ^{drawing}.

By scarcely touching the back of a chair, I ought to understand at once if the seat is turned toward me or in the opposite direction.

By touching the arm of an armchair on which I am invited to sit, it is necessary for me to know whether it is the right or the left, in order not to present the pitiful spectacle of going on extending my hand or of sitting down in the wrong place. It is often necessary to find a free passage with the point of a stick, ^{to} distinguish between the leg of a chair and that of a sofa, the height of a footstool to step over and the base of a desk to avoid. We shall see presently that hearing can give appreciable assistance in this respect. But the very first condition even of this useful intervention of hearing is that by means of designing one shall be accustomed to touch in an orderly way, to schematize and deduce from one given element the dimensions and the nature of the others which are connected with it and which it is not always easy or permissible to touch.

That figure of speech called synecdoche in which the part is expressed for the whole for poetic embellishment is for us unfortunately the most usual manner of knowing real objects. From that may come indeed a more accurate habit of observation and synthesis. What is lost in breadth may be gained in depth. But what is the essential condition of even this rare and hypothetical advantage? A broad formative culture on the foundation of an exact method of knowledge and mental discipline.

You paint putting on one color after another. We use instead of a slate the top of a padded box. The figures of squares and rectangles already represented with sticks in line are now designed with strings and pins. These can be of different size to represent the lines of greater or less importance.

The drawing of the third dimension can be understood but not used by the blind. It will help to give them an idea of it in the secondary school, to fill in a gap which would make the possibility of

painting in different planes or of perspective in general. inconceivable to them. Some use is made of this in the secondary schools by the teaching of solid geometry. The possibility of such understanding is given by the fact that we can pass gradually in modeling from high relief to bas-relief, and then to schematizing the latter in lines that are scarcely different, such as can be had by using strings of various thickness or by lines drawn with larger or smaller dots nearer or farther apart. I succeeded in this way in understanding the designs of solid figures necessary for my secondary school study of geometry and in using such designs reproduced on cards with dots to make recitation in class easier.

There has been a case of a blind professor of mathematics, Penjon, in a lycée in France, (1) and of an engineer who, having lost his sight, proceeded to make designs with pasteboard cut out and fastened together, so that he was able to continue the direction of a cellulose factory. (2) It will not cause surprise that a man who has learned design can continue to use it after losing his sight, just as Beethoven after becoming deaf continued to write music. Neither should it cause surprise that a blind man can learn this language, exotic for him, when it is considered that, if it is impossible for him to understand the shading of color, he is not prevented from understanding that of relief. A ball, a cylinder, even the angle of a piece of furniture, presses with a stronger and more real sensation on one spot of the hand, while all its other spots can with a slight movement touch the successively more distant points. The hand

(1) See A Blind Professor of Mathematics, in The Rights of the School, October 31 and November 15, 1908.

(2) The engineer Enderlein di Wermboht in Scandinavia.

curved in the shape of a cup, so to speak, can give a rough analogy with the retina. The analogy is less rough with the simultaneous touch of both hands and with that tactile and muscular "grasping," "embracing," which still lend expression to the language of vision.

It happens that when an object of a certain size is carefully touched there comes naturally a sort of sense of shading ^{from} ~~in~~ ^{very} ~~the~~ manner in which such an object has become known, something that in analogy with the point of view we may call the point of contact. For example, I place myself at the angle of a writing-desk in such a way as to push my two hands along the edges of the two adjacent sides. The thumbs may be lowered toward the leg of the desk or this may be present in the memory because it has been touched previously. It is clear that the two sides of the top, like the leg, taper off speedily in contact and in imagination. the more distant they become from the angle, until they must be only taken for granted in the parts which one has no opportunity to touch. On this foundation there is ~~even~~ more than enough for even one born blind to understand perspective.

It is necessary also to keep in mind what we have already remarked, that the majority of the blind conserve a remnant of sight, a most valuable auxiliary in this respect. Moreover the question of the third dimension goes beyond elementary education, to which for the present my discussion is limited.

^{Drawing}
HOW ~~VISION~~ CAN BE USEFULLY TAUGHT TO THE BLIND

To return to our children, ^{drawing,} ~~vision,~~ prepared for by tactile knowledge of objects and modeling, was no longer for them an abstract study, but the delightful schematization of what had been represented by building solids or with clay. A rectangle cut in the middle by a string represents a room divided in two, the adjoining halls of the older and younger

placed in the field of a ship, as it usually was with a small sailing ship
the vessel. The saloon is large room with the main entrance from the
left hand and the right hand entrance is separated by a partition.
which will also be separated by the entrance to the vessel.

It appears that when an object is in contact with the vessel's hull
there comes instantly a sort of shock or impact in the vessel's hull
which acts on object and causes it to move. This is usually with the
kind of view as well as the point of contact. For example, a glass
ball of the weight of a feather when it is held in the hand of two
fingers about the same as the ball's weight. The finger may be
loose in the top of the hand as this will be found in the vessel.
When it is held in the hand, it is held in the hand. It is clear that the two sides
of the top, like the ball, that the vessel is in contact with in contact
the ball's weight is held in the hand. The ball's weight is held in the hand.
When the vessel is in the hand, the ball's weight is held in the hand.
In this position, there is a shock or impact in the vessel's hull
in contact with the vessel's hull.

It is observed that as the ball is held in the hand, the vessel's hull
that the weight of the ball causes a shock or impact in the vessel's hull.
When the vessel is in the hand, the ball's weight is held in the hand.
When the vessel is in the hand, the ball's weight is held in the hand.
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girls, cut across again by another string it will form four small rooms, and so on.

Then one can say to a child, "Make a plan of the route from the school to the refectory, from the garden of the cross to the girls' walk, going around from the men's side to the Casale." This kind of exercises will be among the most important material for promotion examinations.

Associating and translating graphically into tactile signs the movements made in walking is of the greatest utility in making orientation exact and strengthening the muscular memory. If one takes care to mention, without need of insisting upon them, the names of the geometrical figures, the angles and curves which from time to time must be made in order to construct the aforementioned practical representations, the pupils without awareness and without fatigue will learn the first notions of geometry. The assimilation of the forms of objects to geometric figures accustoms pupils to schematize them and makes the distinguishing of varieties and details quicker. This then is the secret of describing with order and rapidity things which cannot be touched, such as the general structure of a building or the topography of a city, using speech and geometric approximations. If this is useful to those who see, so that many teachers have made the geometric method the foundation of teaching objects, to the point of exaggerating its importance, it will never be excessive for us.

We begin therefore by showing some real object, then reproductions of it in various dimensions and materials. Then the pupil is asked to model something similar in clay. Finally the fundamental parts

of the outlines of this object are shown in relief. When these outlines were understood, we had the pupils make a copy of them, first surrounding with strings and pins the given design, which was fixed on a cushion. Then the model was copied on another part of the cushion and finally it was made from memory with the model no longer at hand. If surrounding the outline with strings was too difficult for anyone, the exercise was preceded by that of marking with dots a sheet of paper placed between the cushion and the model, so that by tearing the paper along the perforated lines there resulted a figure like the given model. Or such dotted sheets of paper served for exercises of sewing, as the children in kindergarten are accustomed to make.

These exercises, together with weaving strips of paper, shavings and raffia, stringing beads and making nets, were the games of our kindergarten, which continued parallel to the first three elementary classes.

If drawing the third dimension was not to be taught, it was nevertheless very useful to take into consideration the development of solids. The pupils became accustomed to cut and fold paper and cardboard in such a way as to form boxes of various shapes, so that they could then be opened easily into one plane. In this plane the lines made by the folding, which formed the angles of the ~~plane~~ solid, naturally remained sensible to the touch. This work trained the imagination to make the transition from simple to complex forms familiar and to think of solids as formed by the planes which bound them. For example, surrounding a prism with a strip of paper gave

an intuitive understanding that the length of the paper was the perimeter of the base of the prism and that the transverse lines produced by the folding made the lateral planes. Surrounding a pyramid resulted in a fanshaped surface subdivided into triangles.

Besides the drawing of irregular forms, such as leaves, simple flowers, outlines of utensils, profiles of animals, which after the preparation indicated were no longer automatic copies but responded to a need of schematizing real things, I found it very useful to employ certain cardboard figures which I got at Bianchelli's and which now are found in all the bazaars.

These are animals cut in two pieces, one placed over the other with the heads and legs set into them on pivots, so that they can be seen or touched flat as well as in perspective. The animals can also stand upright on all four legs and these can be placed in a position of rest or in the act of walking. The animal was touched first upright with its feet apart, then it was flattened until the perspective in two planes remained. The hindfeet could be opened more or less, if desired, than the forefeet. In analogy with the eye, the hand brushes the flat side and can touch the uncovered parts of the lower side by means of very careful, though light, movements of pressure. These movements are all the more careful because of the interest which the changing relation of the two planes causes, on account of the articulation of the parts. Placing the cardboard figure upright on its four feet, the hand finds the planes and the lines perpendicular which at first it had found horizontal and learns that their relative positions have remained the same, while what

was at first lower is now posterior.

You call "in shadow" the parts which in the language of touch could be called more distant or hidden, if the fingers did not make voluntary movements to go and touch them. Reciprocally, if one places himself to touch from the opposite side, the plane which at first was partly covered remains entirely sensible to the touch, while what was at first in the light is now in shadow.

Perhaps more than one of the old teachers of the blind will consider these concepts too theoretical and complicated. But it will not seem so to anyone experienced in psychology and general pedagogy who comes to this study with enthusiasm. It certainly does not seem so to the successful blind, called exceptional, who know with what late efforts of self-education they have discovered or divined the usefulness of these exercises. And it did not seem so at all to my pupils, who took great interest in touching and drawing those forms which were not rigid but closer to multiform reality.

FROM PLAY AND DRAWING TO READING AND WRITING

I have already told that in a short time and without effort two children learned to read and write. Now I think the reason will seem clear. Since they were trained to think of objects as syntheses and to make such syntheses in a conscious and thoughtful way, the syntheses of sounds, little more than twenty vowels and consonants, of which words are composed, seemed obvious. It was enough to call their attention to this. Here too play was the best aid. It must be added that the letters of the Braille system are far simpler than ordinary

letters, if one only has the key to the system. In fact it has a base of six dots, three vertical and two horizontal, which form a little rectangle.

Six dots make one sign. All the other signs are obtained by eliminating one or another of the dots. Thus we have six of five dots, fifteen of four, twenty of three, fifteen of two and six of one, a total of sixty-three combinations. The key to the system is that when the first series of signs, from a to i, has been learned, the other signs are formed by adding one or two dots to the preceding. With six pegs - indeed, four are enough until g and the signs of the accented letters are learned - with four pegs then or with four pins, all the letters of the alphabet can be formed and the majority with three or less. A is indicated by one dot, e and i by two, o and u by three.

Playing at letters, we said, "Your name is Elena, e, e, a. And yours is Renata, e, e, a. And if I say a, i, a, whom am I calling?" "Anita," they answered at once. "Yes, Anita, and if I call a, u, a?" "Assunta." "Then let us see how to place the cubes in such a way as to form these names." And a zinc tablet on which were the five vowels in relief was given to them. They represented these with objects ^{according to their ability,} which they had at hand, of course more or less stable, as I have said above.

Children accustomed to mobilize sticks and balls by ten at a time for their buildings and ^{designs} ~~structures~~ found it really childish to make groups of two, three or four. And this exercise of forming the Braille letters helped to make the shape of the number of dots stand out in their imagination, a difficulty which hinders blind children ^{for} a long time.

when they are set to decipher without preparation the letters of the primer or of a card marked with dots. Frequently a child seated in front of two others would exclaim, "Look, we are making a u!"

So when they were accustomed to distinguish the vowels in words and to represent them with solids placed together, we proceeded with the same method for the consonants. "Thus we have said, A, i, a, Anita." But it might mean another name. Let us think a moment.

Palmira, Maria ... Argia, certainly, Argia too, and many other words.

Then it is necessary to ~~have a sign for~~ ^{show} n, t and all these other signs which are called consonants. If anyone wants to know how they are made, here they are, let her tell me which consonants she wishes and I will show her how to make them." It was fun for these children to take the consonants from words. And without too much explanation, they understood how syllables are composed and consonants doubled, which piled up with the object of an exercise in the primer confused children so much. As the task was presented little by little - the assistant first cleverly explained the simplest words - our pupils learned to read and write as they had learned to speak and to build.

When the habit had been formed of distinguishing with certainty by a game of hearing the sounds composing words and of scanning syllables intuitively, when the knowledge of the letters of the alphabet had been acquired and the sign of each one written in the muscular memory, then only we gave as a reward a page on which were written words and short sentences which the children were to guess. Then it was necessary to be careful about another thing, to prevent them from acquiring the bad

habit of reading with only the index finger of the right hand or of moving both hands to read every letter.

The blind of Belgium have first place in reading. While we use in general writing with dots whose height is two and a half millemeters, they read rapidly with dots of twenty and even eighteen decimillemeters. The principal secret is the habit of reading with the middle and fourth fingers as well as the index fingers of both hands and in such a way that while the right hand goes along a line, the left hand, placed to ^{keep} ~~hold~~ the ^{mark} ~~sign~~ of the following line, partly anticipates the reading of it. Let me explain:- suppose that I must read the word "insepa-~~rable~~," the first three syllables of which are at the end of a line. While the right hand reads these three syllables and rises to go and receive from the left hand instructions about the following line, the latter has already gone ahead and read "-rable," so that the right hand can continue from this point. If the left hand does not hold the standard at the beginning of the line, the right must creep instead of leaping, and this represents a loss of time and wears out the book. The prejudice in favor of indulging the laziness of the "poor" blind is such that in England, until the reform promoted by Armitage, the Moon system was much in use. In this one line is written from left to right and the following from right to left.

It must be admitted that the difficulty of teaching reading to the blind consists in training them to read with several fingers, because so great is the curiosity to know what is written that they naturally rely on the most convenient finger, the index finger of the right hand, commonly called for that reason, "the reading finger." But I made use of that curiosity for my own purpose, and when I had something

interesting for a pupil to read, I made the condition that she should read it with the left hand, holding the right hand behind the back of the bench, or I had her bandage the index finger as if she had hurt it.

Writing Braille with a stylus began only after experience in reading and forming the letters with objects placed together in the manner described above. For this purpose the boxes with a double bottom, the upper one pierced with holes into which the balls were fitted, were especially useful. Writing Braille with a stylus has indeed the disadvantage of being done in reverse direction, from right to left, in order that the embossing may come out on the right side. Besides, to handle the stylus with precision in the rectangular openings in line is a somewhat more delicate operation which it is better to defer if it is not to become wearisome and discouraging.

It often happens in fact that numerous lively children a month after their entering an institution come to grips with the Braille slate, to punch six dots in every rectangle of the line, the usual exercise preparatory to writing. The poor little ones, partly because of the stylus which escapes from their fingers and punches wherever it arrives, partly because of the boredom of this exercise without immediate oversight and without variety, make botches and get a reputation for being stupid or indifferent which often they will never lose. Two boys were shown to me a year ago on my visit to an institution. They were adorable, bright and serene, notwithstanding that the teacher told me in their presence that they were defective, that for three years they had repeated the first class, because they had not succeeded in writing two passable lines, although they had learned to read quickly.

We did not begin to teach ordinary writing before the second class

with the method of raised and incised letters of which I have spoken in connection with the training of the hand, then by having the children make designs with strings, and finally with a pencil. I think it will be useful to say something more on this subject, because there is a difference of opinion among teachers and because it may answer to the desire for some explanation on the part of anyone who has not much experience of our systems of corresponding with sighted people who do not know Braille.

I wrote all my exercises in the public schools with a pencil in a sort of print, which is made in the opening of a metal plate sliding along a notched ruler. The releasing of a spring makes the passage from one notch to another heard, to regulate the distance between the letters. The opening can be lengthened or shortened by means of two movable bars controlled by the thumb and index finger of the left hand to make the upper and lower strokes of the letters. This instrument is called the Galimberti, after the inventor, who was assistant in the institution for the blind at Milan. It is similar to the apparatus devised by Martuscelli, founder of the institution for the young blind at Naples, which gives the same writing and differs only in the way in which the the bars function.

The Ballu system, which consists of forming Roman letters by means of raised dots, is also used. This writing has the advantage of being read by the blind also, but it is very slow, requiring numerous dots for every letter. O requires eight, m about fifteen. It is very slow and tiring to read for the sighted, because the dots, white on white, confuse the eye.

The typewriter has come to our aid. It must not be thought that we use special machines. As the pianist finds the keys with the muscular sense, so it is sufficient for the order of the keyboard of the typewriter to be indicated for us to be able to write without the need of having the letter in relief on every key. Experienced typists also write without looking at the keyboard. A number of blind persons have won matches of speed and accuracy in typewriting contests with sighted people. But the typewriter is inconvenient to carry and would be disturbing in a school because of the noise.

The blind ^{man} needs to be able to write with something easily carried and silent. But the Galimberti writing has two serious disadvantages. It is not very rapid and it is not valid for signatures and legal documents.

Adults who lose their sight can continue to write easily merely with the help of a hand guide by relying on their muscular memory. But a blind man obliged to acquire the automatic skill necessary to write without the correction of sight must serve a long apprenticeship much guided by a sighted person. For this reason the teaching of freehand writing has not up to the present time been considered practical for blind children. I learned it only at the age of twenty-five, when my hand was stiffened and I lacked the patience and time necessary for long practise. I succeeded, however, in making myself intelligible, writing a little worse than the illiterate who learn to write in the army. The Galimberti writing also has the disadvantage of being impossible in a notebook or on a card, since the page must be of a certain size to be fastened under the ruler.

I thought therefore that since freehand writing is, as in the Montessori system, a corollary, so to speak, of drawing and of the rational education of the muscular sense of the hand, blind children ought to attain it with practise not excessively longer and more diligent than that required by normal children. Therefore I made the ^{experiment} last of not teaching my pupils the Galimberti writing before the fourth class, hoping that they would be able to use freehand writing. In fact, at the end of the third class they succeeded in writing legibly, but with much effort and with very uneven writing. I cannot say whether the time given to practise was insufficient or whether the undertaking is really too difficult. I found it wise to teach the Galimberti writing in the fourth class, especially with the prospect of having to send the pupils to pursue their studies in the public schools. This exercise is useful, however, to make it possible for a blind man to write his signature and to write ^{a few} ~~two~~ lines when he cannot use the apparatus. (1)

OBJECT LESSONS

After what we have reported, it seems clear that object lessons were not a number on the program, but life in and out of school aimed to be a continual object lesson.

Teachers of the blind are easily misled by the verbosity of their

(1) There are numerous hand guides in use, some of them very complicated. At the institution for the blind in Florence they have begun recently to teach freehand writing in the upper elementary classes with the Mecacci hand guide, apparently with satisfactory results.

pupils. Since they are deprived of the distractions of sight, the sound of a speaking voice, especially if it is modulated and constructs fine sentences, allures them to listen for hours, merely for the musical pleasure. They compete in firing questions to give them material for talking more, ever with increased animation. Frequently they repeat so well and ask such apt questions that it seems impossible that these are anything but the product of formal logical conjectures.

As a clever hostess marvellously finds arguments to detain her guests, so our children quickly find the teacher's weak side, to make him talk. The teacher therefore can never sufficiently guard himself from these snares. One capable teacher who perceived the danger took the course of not permitting pupils to ask any questions. (1) But this is a fall from Scylla to Charybdis, because blind children are so prone to passivity that to forbid them to interrupt to show their curiosity, even if it is merely artificial, is to make them still more mechanical. In these questions, even if they are merely artificial, the keen teacher can see the train of their thought. Frequently questions asked with the purpose of distracting give the teacher an opportunity to drive home an argument in his turn, asking questions to provoke attentive and serious answers.

"While he seems to allow himself to be distracted, the good teacher uses and coordinates the distractions of his pupils for his own purposes." The remark is by a good and not talkative blind teacher,

(1) Ines Locatelli, Instructions and Programs for Elementary Schools for the Blind. Milan, 1922.

Abele Ghidoni. The teacher then should not let himself be dragged along by the questions of his pupils, but should never subject them prematurely to discipline when curiosity and liveliness are involved. The teacher must be ready and vigilant. He must not drag his pupils along but follow them, disciplining them only as we did with whistles in running, in order that they may not be scattered and that they may walk in the path which the teacher himself has laid out.

Every day, new material to touch; that is the secret. And bear in mind that only the perceptions which have a repercussion, a reaction in our motor centres are assimilated. The repetition should never be verbal but should be given by means of some practical application or at least of some deduction, so that ^{not} the mechanical memory but what Kant calls the judicious may be employed to make use of our lessons.

It seems to me impossible to ~~make~~ determine the order of these in a program based on a fixed grading of difficulties. That is difficult which does not find contact in previous knowledge. The order of lessons ought to be more flexible for the blind, more at the discretion of the teacher, because the dispositions of the pupils and the possibilities of their environment have much more influence in varying ~~the varying~~ the imaginative material and the degree of development of each one.

The freedom of children, rightly and powerfully defended by Montessori, is still more guarded against and resisted for blind children, because their poverty of amusements and spontaneous knowledge too easily gives opportunity to a teacher who wishes to mould them all

on one pattern. If the teaching is to be restoring or corrective, its first duty is to promote self-education on the resources and the peculiar characteristics of each individual, not to schematize and discipline in the weak initiative and freedom which are already insufficient. I know well that all this is at the cost of fatigue and sacrifice of the teachers. But we have already seen that for that very reason they ought to be helped by experienced assistants out of school and to have few pupils in each class. Helen Keller is a prodigy owing chiefly to the complete devotion of Miss Sullivan.

Every day then I had to take to school some new object to touch, some new thing to make. Rather than to spend money on expensive teaching material which remains lifeless or deteriorates in the museum, it was necessary to have means to buy something daily. One day macaroni with gravy was prepared in school, since we could ^{not} disturb the sister attached to the kitchen and since the lesson could continue without losing time accompanied by the appetizing odor and the pleasant sound of the bacon frying and the paste boiling. Another time we set up an electric bell in the school, another we acted as commercial travelers with pattern books of textiles, another time grapes were picked and wine was made. The scales were used a great deal to weigh fruit and sweets ~~and~~ to divide them in shares that were equal or in proportion to age. I remember that one day I took a small hamper of peaches, which after being much handled to distinguish the various shapes were finally well floured and fried for the afternoon lunch~~on~~.

Milk a goat, raise a few silkworms, take care of a small chicken coop, weave tow, take apart a lock, a cupboard, put together little

jackets and dresses for dolls, pour water (white wine!) from flasks into bottles, from bottles into glasses, roast coffee; and when complete novelty is lacking, make substitutions and integrate them with imagination, if only there is something real to be known and handled. So one pretends to give medicine to a sick child and wraps a pinch of salt in a moistened wafer in such a way that when the outside is touched with the tongue the taste does not come through. This tests whether the pill is well made and whether the invalid does not have to spit out the bitter taste.

Elizabeth P. Putnam of Cliftondale, Massachusetts, who lost her sight at the age of eighteen and was re-educated in the institution for the blind in Boston, reached such a degree of independence as to be able to nurse her sister in a serious illness. A young working man who in these circumstances was able to appraise her virtues and abilities, asked her in marriage. She herself tells the ups and downs of her life as wife and mother and how she succeeded, without being able to afford the luxury of servants, to perform all the duties of a^{fine} housewife. (1)

Without need of having recourse to America, there is in the institution for the blind in Lecce a young woman, Antonia Fedele, who has acted as nurse for three children sick with eczema, giving them medicine and bandaging them alone, with the most careful disinfecting and to the complete satisfaction of the doctor. Alfredo Monconi,

(1) See in the periodical The Friend of the Blind, (L'Amico dei Ciechi) July-August 1893, the article Wife, Mother, Housewife, in which there is a full summary of this autobiography).

at present director of the Roman ^{Workshop} ~~Laboratory~~ for the Blind, having lost his sight and being a member of a needy family, took the place of his mother in the care of the kitchen and household affairs while she went to earn her living in a ^{workshop} ~~laboratory~~.

In my institution I could not follow all this program, because my freedom was greatly limited and because the school came to an end after four years, just at the wrong moment. But it could already be argued with certainty that if elsewhere the blind who are clever in these practical affairs are isolated cases, this state of things results from lack of encouragement and practise, so that only the most outstanding initiative develops, in spite of the prudence and prohibitions of the teachers. All our pupils to a greater or less degree showed themselves capable.

Let us keep then the peeling of vegetables, potatoes, apples, a pleasant pastime for the little ones, gathering grapes and fruit within reach of the hand or from safe ladders, gardening, of which I shall say more later on, and other similar tasks, which are the best results of object lessons and the best preparation for professional work, whatever it may be, musical or literary. I know no other object lesson than this, which is ~~still~~ identified with the still insufficiently appreciated "school of work."

ARITHMETIC AND GEOMETRYCONCRETE REPRESENTATION OF QUANTITIES

No special explanation is needed to teach a blind person the operations of arithmetic, except perhaps for anyone who has never visited one of our institutions, the devices for writing the numbers in columns. The Braille system is not well adapted to this purpose, as it must be used ordinarily to write on the reverse side. And even if writing machines are used, they require a no shorter and less complicated working to serve this purpose. It should be noted that there are writing machines for Braille also.

The most common system in our institutions is a box divided into cells like those of compositors. Each cell contains a certain number of types bearing in relief a figure or a comma, minus or plus sign, etc., the signs used for the operations. By setting the types into a perforated ^{slate} ~~tablet~~, the numbers are formed and arranged in columns in the manner desired for the operations.

Much to be preferred, however, is the cubarithme, invented, if I remember correctly, by Professor Ballu of the National Institute for the Blind in Paris. In a box are numerous small lead cubes, all equal, with one smooth side which serves for the spaces. Each of the other five has a group of dots, which according to the way in which the cube is placed, can represent the first ten signs of the Braille alphabet, which correspond to the signs of the ten numerals. It is also possible to have five other signs which can be used to indicate commas and other arithmetical signs.

The pupil takes a cube. Turning it rapidly between his fingers, he selects the side on which is the sign ~~which~~ he needs, and places the cube in the proper way on the perforated slate. The cubarithme

THE HISTORY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The whole population of the United States is divided into three great divisions, the Eastern, the Middle, and the Western. The Eastern division is the most populous, and contains the most advanced civilization. The Middle division is the most fertile, and contains the most numerous and powerful tribes. The Western division is the most extensive, and contains the most numerous and powerful tribes. The Eastern division is the most populous, and contains the most advanced civilization. The Middle division is the most fertile, and contains the most numerous and powerful tribes. The Western division is the most extensive, and contains the most numerous and powerful tribes.

is much more economical, since it requires one box of types instead of ten. Besides, its use is more convenient, since when the operation is finished, it is not necessary to replace each type in its own cell, but they can be simply overturned into the box.

In the upper classes it cannot be too strongly urged to take these contrivances from the children, to train them to do the operations in Braille on both sides of a page according to the usage practised by Kunz in the institution of Dürren in Alsace. On one side are written the elements given, for example, the multiplicand and multiplier. Then the writing is uncovered, so as to be legible, and on the other side are written the partial products, ^{and} these are added, being written gradually, and the final product ^{is written} in its place under the elements given. The thing seems more difficult to explain than to do. It has the advantage, always greatly desirable, that the blind pupil does not have to drag a special apparatus about with him and can do any operation simply on a sheet of paper and the easily carried Braille slate.

The three methods described are in the order of difficulty, but with well prepared pupils the first may be omitted and the last used first even in the third elementary class.

Something which on the other hand is useful to consider is forming concrete representations of quantities. People learn to count certain given objects and finally appraise the number approximately by the eye. There is a true and proper arithmetical imagination beyond which numbers are rational, abstract expressions. For the Greeks the indeterminate number which released the imagination was the myriad. For the Romans it seems that this imagination was more

restricted, since their language expresses with the number six hundred an immense quantity. We say with the greatest indifference, "So and so is rich, he has eight or ten millions." The budgets of states are becoming accustomed also to speak with indifference of billions. But the value of these colossal units is very far from striking our imagination adequately.

To make numerical imagination concrete and amplify it as much as possible is of no small practical value, and it seems to me that this is not yet sufficiently considered even in the education of normal children. For example, I once said to a bright little girl in the third elementary class who always got the highest marks in arithmetic, "Solve this problem:- I have some hens and rabbits which altogether have forty heads and one hundred legs. How many rabbits and how many hens are there?" The child could not get the answer and I began to put her on the track. "How many legs has a hen?" "Two." "Two legs then and one head." "Yes." "And two hens?" "Four legs and two heads." "And how many legs have five hens?" "A great many!" And when I insisted that she should give the exact number, she asked, "But what operation am I to do?" Going then from twenty to forty is not intuitive for her.

If others however have the approximate number in the visual imagination, where will the blind have it? I have already made an explanation of this in connection with buying and selling fruits and sweetmeats. It is necessary to give the children a muscular tactile representation, to train them to count objects, taking and placing them by fives, by tens, in ordered groups, so as to be able to tell the quantity almost exactly from the amplitude. I have observed also that progress is much more rapid when one avoids making them practise

in written operations on abstract numbers. One must take care to say, for example, "Let us add fifty plus thirty plus twenty-five lire," or, "Let us divide three thousand five hundred and twenty cherries among seventy-five children; how many will each get?" and when the quotient is obtained, ask, "Are there few or many? How many will the pocket of your apron hold? Where will you put the others? How much paper will be enough to make a cornucopia to hold them?"

The imaginative syntheses of the blind are so narrow that this sort of exercises alone can do them valuable service. The emotion produced by the sight of innumerable stars, the immensity of the sea, the pearls of dew in a meadow, in short all these impressions which give rise to the feeling of mathematical grandeur cannot be given to the blind man except by training him to reflect and imagine in a concrete manner the greatest numbers possible.

Mental arithmetic is also very useful and the old-fashioned teachers did well to insist on it; intuitive mental arithmetic, however, that which considers, so to speak, every large number as the sum of small ones. The other kind, which works as if one had before him numbers written in columns is a form of acrobatics and a waste of attention. But to imagine something concrete when someone says a thousand, ten thousand, a hundred thousand, a million, is an exercise which teachers in general and teachers of the blind in particular will do well to inculcate, although without pedantry.

These considerations are valuable also for the teaching of geometry, but in this they find a more concrete manner of application. In connection with the training of the hand I have already indicated the value of relating every object to geometric forms, simple or complex, so that in this respect it seems to me that I have nothing to add.

But I think it well to insist on the method of teaching geometry. The surface of a square metre should be observed concretely, and a table, a sheet of paper, a stone, the space of a wall or an opening of this size should be touched in length and breadth. Then it will be possible to reproduce quickly a strip twice as long and half as wide, then compare with the equal surface of a polygon, a circle, an ellipse, and divide them at will mentally into squares of a decimetre each and these again into ten centimetres each in length.

These things have become intuitive by themselves for those who see, but the teacher of the blind must cleverly enliven these exercises with play to avoid pedantry. If he succeeds in doing this, however, he succeeds in giving to the imagination of the blind pupil the discipline and development most suited and important for his practical orientation. To make my idea clear, its application to topography and geography will be sufficient.

TOPOGRAPHY. HOW THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY IS VITALIZED.

Topography, indeed, not geography, is taught up to the fourth elementary class and this teaching for the blind pupil must be very detailed, because his horizon is incomparably narrower. To walk alone through the entire house and its surroundings is an important matter for him, as it is for a sighted child to go alone from one end of his city to the other, or from his own village to a neighboring one.

Kunz, before putting into the hands of his pupils the topographic map of their city, makes them practise on that of the institution and its surroundings. As I have said, we did ~~not~~ this too, without having a map made for the purpose, but drawing it bit by bit, a little at a

time, in our pre-school exercises. I cannot say whether it would be considered superfluous, given my scanty means and the simplicity of the thing, to have a plan in relief made of the Margherita Hospice. As I think of it again, it comes to my mind that I asked the engineer of the institution for a pen and ink drawing of the plan, the design of which a teacher would have easily reproduced with dotted lines. The engineer forgot to give it to me and I to insist, since in the meantime the children advanced to studying the topography of Rome, the interest and value of which was now much greater for them.

It should be noted that I had a relief plan of Rome made with only the main arteries at first, since the network of all the streets would have been extremely confusing. Here too you can give contrast with color; we could get very limited variety with different dots. For example, the Lungo Tevere was indicated by two parallel lines with dots far apart to represent somewhat the paths planted with trees. The walls were shown by two lines very near together with close dots. The gardens and villas were spaces full of scattered dots, the squares, spaces closed by a line which outlined the shape, the streets, simple lines, the railroad, short vertical lines in the direction of the sleepers. In short, a complex of conventional signs, not without some analogy, however, in order that intuition might find a motive. Of course the ^{environs} ~~surroundings~~ of the hospice were reproduced with special care and the hospice itself represented by a large rectangle full of close dots.

It may be said that orientation on a topographic map is for a blind man a continual problem in geometry. In the same way as in geographic description it is made possible to approximate a continent,

a country, a peninsula with geometric figures. Only rarely do they give figures of objects, like our own beautiful Boot. So, however less intuitive the relations of the whole are for us, so much the more we must form them with the material of analytical and more exact elements, the figures and boundaries of which geometry ~~geometry~~ provides for us.

Then the ^{pupils} could devote themselves with good results to these problems:- what is the shortest way to go from the hospice to the Piazza del Popolo and from there to St. John's? The interest in such problems arose from the fact that when the teachers took the girls to Rome, they made an agreement that the latter should tell the streets they were to traverse. The more quickly the way was shown, the sooner they would arrive. And at cross streets or in the middle of squares the guides stopped and asked, "And now where ought we to turn?" Before going out those who were interested studied very carefully the route to be taken. Their points of reference showed the way and they made use of the descriptions read in the text book or heard from us - a fountain, a garden, a square. Of course we had to be satisfied with a broad approximation, but it was enough to train them to be attentive and to coordinate schematic representations with representations rich in all the details of reality.

In regard to topographic and geographic maps, Mark Kunz has made long studies to construct geographic maps and designs in relief, such as are of the right size and precision, not too much burdened with details and with more practical conventional lines to show by touch the seacoasts, plains, rivers, lakes, boundaries, all those descriptions, in short, which ordinary maps give so clearly with colors. The maps of Kunz, however, have a very serious inconvenience; they are mute for us. They are printed in ink, so that even an ~~un~~expert person can serve as interpreter, but an interpreter

is necessary until we have reached the point of committing it all to memory. I fastened ^{under} the geographic relief map a duplicate sheet on which is marked a number or initials corresponding exactly to each locality. When I wish to know what city or mountain or river I have under the finger of one hand, I put the other hand under the map and touch the initials underneath at the desired point. An attached notebook records in order the explanation of the initials, and so without other help I can decipher the map. This appliance has proved very practical in the judgment of several studious blind persons. In general, we study geography with much pleasure and it contributes effectively to make topographic orientation prompt and sure.

It is necessary to consider that if I enter a large house, climb the stairs and am shown into an apartment, I have no other means ^{of} orienting myself than to keep in mind in what relation I have come and found myself with the front door and the street. If I do not take notice of this, I cannot know whether the window of the room where I find myself is in the front of the house or looks out on another street. It will be said, "What does it matter?" It matters above all, because a blind man who is walking alone needs not to be disoriented, and whenever he stops without knowing in what direction he is turned relative to an outside point of reference, he very easily forgets the track of the movements he has made and will be confused or hesitating before starting on the way again. Then it will be necessary for him to give his hosts the inconvenience of going downstairs when he leaves, or they will be afraid that he will fall or be confused. All this increases that compassion, depressing for him and for others, which makes an obstacle to the confidence he needs to be willingly accepted as a professional man and as a friend.

Even one who has a guide feels himself lost in a place if he lacks

reference to the cardinal points or at least to one outside known point. Imagine: I am sitting in a spot and think of my house. It is natural to turn, at least mentally, in that direction. But what direction? It is natural, also, for a lively blind person to turn his head slightly and to make an easy gesture while talking and this attracts much sympathy and attention to him. But when he has lost his compass, such movements and animated gestures of his speech are no longer spontaneous, so they become clumsy and out of place. As the teaching of geometry schematizes suitably complex forms and gives life to large ones, making them perceived like multiples of forms within actual reach of our limited senses, so geography is the most vitalizing study of spatial sensations and cooperates in making us construct a broad imaginative horizon, which removes the dense wall of darkness in which truly an untaught blind man is enclosed and buried. If at the soft breath of the breeze which caresses my face my imagination can run swiftly to the place whence the breeze came, the high wooded mountains full of echoes and silence or the resounding seacoast with its sharp odors of salt seaweed would make the caress softer. But if I do not know from what direction the breeze blows, it is an unknown friend whose language I do not understand.

WHAT IS THE PLACE OF MUSIC IN A SCHOOL FOR BLIND CHILDREN?

Edmondo De Amicis says in his book Heart that ~~is~~ the keenest aspiration of blind children is to study music, and their greatest sorrow to be told that they have no talent. This is true; but is it true, as so many teachers declare, that all those who do not succeed have no talent? At the same time the common prejudice is that all the blind have talent for music. On this subject it is necessary to have a clear understanding. In Japan those deprived of sight have applied themselves

for centuries to learn massage, so that in that language "blind" is used as the same word to indicate "masseur." With us, when they began to teach us, the most obvious instruction seemed to be music. The tradition became law. Saint Cecelia is depicted as the musician of legend and the affinity of her name, Caecilia, with caecitas, must also have had some influence in associating in the popular imagination blindness and music. It is certain that from this association originated the curious cause of our own education.

The Philanthropist Valentin Haüy at a fair in Paris saw some poor blind men with enormous cardboard spectacles drawing bows up and down the strings of violins, making an infernal din, in front of great placards on which musical notes were printed in enormous characters. This greatly amused the rough crowd and attracted it to the spectacle for which these unfortunates served as a decoy. The philanthropist was filled with bitterness and disdain. He gave a silver coin to one of those poor creatures, who, certainly not accustomed to such generous alms, feared that the gentleman had made a mistake, and calling him at once, told him of his supposed error. Valentin Haüy, amazed and moved, took this blind man into his house, saying, "As you have been able to distinguish a silver coin by touch, I will teach you to read words and music with your fingers."

taught Music was undoubtedly the most widespread and accurately *ly* subject ~~taught~~ in all institutions for the blind, and when any teachers tried to subordinate it to manual work, their institutions lost reputation. Almost without exception blind children applied themselves to the study of music with enthusiasm, but the tedium of

practising quickly selected them. Did it select them really because of their talent? This is not at all true. I cannot wholly agree with the opinion of those teachers who deny the existence of innate talents and maintain that the vocation is given only by the environment. The foundation that nature lays cannot be denied, yet it should never be exaggerated, all the more that we come to know it ^{only} very late, that is when the ^{child} ~~adult~~ begins to give the first sure manifestations of his own originality, and usually the prepossessions of parents and teachers anticipate judgment on data that are insufficient or quite wrongly interpreted. This is why it is necessary to protect the originality of the pupils, promoting their general culture and postponing specialization, that this may be determined in a certain sense without the pupil being aware of it. Not to digress from my subject, I can certainly declare that among my companions in the secondary school, several have made a praiseworthy success as musicians who had ~~no~~ less inclination than myself. I was bored by the technical exercises just because of the love which I had for music. This idea is illustrated in a masterly way by Romain Rolland in Jean Christophe. The dilettante often lacks constancy and opportunity. Let the genius alone; the genius is an exception.

Let us leave also the other question, which every day finds more adherents among those who are concerned about the education and situation of the blind; whether the profession of musician is now the most advisable, or whether it is not more practical to direct the blind, except those who show really irresistible tendencies, to other professions or trades. This question in my opinion is mistaken

and at any rate it is premature to discuss it now., What I affirm without fear of being rationally confuted is that with present methods the blind ~~xxx~~ inclined toward music are badly selected, because music is taught from the beginning with a technical aim rather than with the aim of development.

Carlo Grimandi, a distinguished professional musician, presented to the Congress for the Blind in Bologna in 1910 a very important report on the harm which results from educating our children with the idea of ~~xxx~~ having them specialize as soon as possible. In another article published in a newspaper, Il Progresso of Bologna, November 9, 1920, he upholds with good arguments the need of teaching music to all children to train imagination and feeling.

It seems that teachers are beginning to give the teaching of singing and music the place of first rank, which it had with such fruit in Greece. But for the blind, almost wholly inaccessible to the plastic arts, music is all the more indispensable. After all, as Grimandi remarks in the article in Il Progresso cited above, and as has already been noted by Dufau, who was director of the institution for the blind in Paris in about 1850, many shades of impressions, which by a panorama, a monument, by nature or a variety of places or seasons are quite capable of moving the blind, remain sterile and soon disappear, unless they find some mode of expression and of thus being fixed in consciousness and memory.

We all know that that which cannot be thought over or recalled cannot be called ours, it does not belong to us. Now if someone asks you, or if you wish to recall yourself what is the beauty of a panorama, or a monument, this is bound to the concrete representations

of certain objects. When these concrete representations are recalled, the "passion imprinted" which accompanied the sight of them returns.

To explain my meaning better, I will limit myself to the example of a beautiful person. Eyes, forehead, hair, so and so; the description will be more or less inadequate to communicate your feeling to others, but it will be enough to rekindle it for you. So it is his very self who commands within and goes there to find words. Perhaps for a blind man also the impression of any person which he experiences from the sound of the voice will not be different. I will not speak of other concomitant sensations in order not to plunge into difficult and controversial matters. Perhaps for a blind man then there are no beautiful or ugly persons, attractive or repellent, in innumerable degrees or shadings? Certainly, and it should be noted that this does not coincide with the musical beauty or ugliness of the voice, since sometimes voices of a disagreeable sound do not prevent us from finding the person from whom they come beautiful to our taste, like certain orchestral instruments, the clarinet with the nasal voice or the harsh sound of the horn, which according to the time and place in which they are used produce most agreeable effects. What then is beautiful or ugly in a person for a blind man? He is not competent to express it to others, or even exactly to himself, except with musical analogies. This condition of ours is well expressed by the triplet of Dante:-
 "As he who dreaming sees and after the dream the passion remains imprinted, and the rest does not return to his mind."

But if we understand a little music - it is not necessary to be a performer or a composer - if we have developed the sense of musical taste, then we find ourselves before those intangible forms of beauty, like all those who have translated their impressions into music, refusing even poetry as too definite. Pure symphonic music, especially orchestral music, ought to be made familiar to blind children, with frequent hearing of it and suitable comments.

But it was never possible for me to take my pupils to hear an orchestra. The condition that they should be accompanied everywhere by a sister and the lack of permission from the authorities of their order for the sisters to go to the theatre or the Augusteo prevented. So as to musical education I cannot report any notable experiment. In this respect, I let things go ^{on} as they had gone at first, that is, a sister and some companion of the young women's unit taught the children the elements of solfa and of the piano. I should also have liked to have the little girls taken to sing in church with the older ones, but this was never possible. Each one in turn devoted an hour a day to music with permission to apply herself longer during the numerous days of vacation. In school and in the garden they sang some little songs taught by the teachers, like the children of the elementary schools, but from the mere fact of living together with others who played and sang together in chorus, these songs were too childish for their taste, therefore little liked, and lacking something better, they preferred not to sing.

There was however an event in the hospice which ought not to be passed over. In the agreement made with me by the Directive Council, apart from the education of the girls, it was arranged that I, together with the sisters, should give work to ^{the other} ~~all the~~ inmates, in order that all

at 17 we understand a little more - it is not necessary to be a
 physicist or a biologist - it is not necessary to know all about
 the laws of physics or the laws of biology, but it is necessary to
 know how to use the laws of physics and the laws of biology in
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according to their ability should apply themselves to some profitable occupation. I immediately found a way to make use of some young women who almost without help had succeeded in acquiring a certain ability on the piano and the harmonium. Some of their companions because of such ability had been received in convents or schools to play in church and teach a little choral singing. They received very kind treatment, had the satisfaction of feeling themselves useful and had also a present on holidays or an allowance of five lire monthly. It was too little, but they could not claim more. If they were better prepared, they would be more efficient and could therefore perhaps get better conditions.

The opportunity of having as my guest for several months the teacher Carlo Grimandi, whom I have already mentioned. I begged him to come to my assistance, with the double aim of training the taste of my pupils by having them hear good music and having communicated to them the vital spark which he, as a true artist, infuses into those who listen to him and are near him. Besides, he would be able to judge somewhat the condition and the aptitude of the girls who applied themselves to music, to advise me whether they were capable of progress and for whom it was worth while to go to expense.

As a result of the advice and lessons of Grimaldi, in a little over two months two girls made such notable gains that Her Majesty the Queen Mother, who for several years on her visits to the hospice had no longer cared to hear any music, because the performances were so wretched and in such bad taste, was surprised and pleased, and she advised the President not to let the two girls lack the help to study until they had secured a diploma. Unfortunately, when Grimaldi had gone, the help was put off from month to month until years had passed.

The presence of this artist lasted ~~for~~^{so} short a time that it could not have a permanent effect on the children as far as musical education was concerned. But his influence was full of fascination, so that they listened to him motionless for whole hours, and for love of his music they were docile and remembered his counsels for a long time. ✓

To take up again in conclusion the question raised at the beginning, have all the blind talent for music? Talent to become musicians, no, although living in a musical environment and finding in music the almost unique, certainly the most suitable field for aesthetic satisfaction, increases greatly in comparison with the sighted the percentage of musicians. But the thought of professional specialization ought to be absent from the methods and the aim of elementary education.

Singing in one or more parts, reading of music and solfa, frequent hearing of good music and suitable comments, also for anyone who shows interest to begin the study of the piano or some other instrument, are after all the best way of cultivating talent in those who have it and creating it in those who have not. If then the best pupils have started on a musical career, almost all will continue to practise for delight in the sound of some instrument, or at least will retain the taste for music and the intimate habit of musical intuition and reminiscence, entrusting to these many impressions otherwise unobtainable of beauty, which in its most ineffable degree, even in ordinary speech, is called harmony.

I know the objection which teachers of music will offer - the best years to acquire technique are the earliest and blind children already enter the institutions too ~~late~~ late. First of all, I refer to the recommendation already often made, that they should be received earlier, and so toward the age of nine or ten they will be able to apply themselves

to regular study, with the great advantage of being already well prepared. Then, who will say that the child who shows special interest cannot begin to play even at the age of seven? We do not say that because the study should not be with technical aim the teacher should excuse bad position of the hands or arms or body. So even these years will not be lost for technique and will be time gained for spiritual development, of which an artist even more than any other has need.

Spiritual development! The blind ought in that to find even light. Those poor prodigies of technical precocity for whom their friends and the public are so lavish of praise, away from their instrument are almost always so embarrassed, so vain, and in practical life so unhappy and misplaced that it is a good deed to restrain them.

IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MANUAL WORK

Considerations similar to the function which the teaching of music ought to have can be offered for this other ^{subject} ~~question~~ which engages our teachers so much, that of manual work. In some institutions it has not yet been introduced, in order not to take time from music. In others the teachers of music complain ~~that~~ because the greater part of the time is denied them. The children stay for hours a day in the workshop, where they make straw seats for chairs, weave mats, hampers and fruit baskets, hard and rough materials which indeed make the children's hands callous and interfere with the technical study of the piano.

Several of these institutions do the grave wrong, excusable only in part because of practical needs, of accepting orders for work, which frequently must be rushed so as not to work at a loss. Thus the work becomes no longer educational but actually professional and industrial. It is necessary to be careful about the quality so as not to waste time

and raw material, ^{and} at certain times to force the children to excessively long schedules, then long idleness in the dull season.

Then to whom shall we teach manual work? To all, it is said, in theory. But in practice, as a child shows gradually that he succeeds little in this and better in music, he is let off, to such an extent that I have known blind men, skilful musicians, incapable of learning how to nail a board, and furthermore disdainful of doing so. A boy who is bored by practising the tiresome exercises of Charles Czerny is shut up in ~~the~~ the workshop as not gifted in music, so the workshop is the bugbear. Imagine if the consciousness of a workman can be developed. The boy feels himself an outcast among more fortunate companions who succeed in music or in "literary studies," as they are called, and this lasts ^{throughout} ~~during~~ the elementary course.

May I be pardoned for insisting on this state of things, because I must raise my voice and cause it to cease as soon as possible. To-day ~~in~~ all our institutions in Italy and France, ~~and~~ also in Germany, and Austria, are governed by these teaching standards. The cause, as we have already seen, is the excessive concern with being practical, to have pupils specialize as soon as possible for the profession or trade from which they must expect their bread, which it is all the more difficult for them to earn because of their lower efficiency and the possibility of their applying themselves to a very limited number of occupations. The whole concern of the teachers is to ask themselves what work is most adapted and most remunerative for their pupils, and according to the conviction which each one forms or the experiments which he thinks suitable to try, the children are pushed, like real and actual apprentices, into one or another special work or study.

At last this system was condemned by the commission, called by the Minister of Public Instruction in February 1923, which declared that in the teaching of music as in that of work, there should not be in the period of the elementary course professional interest and aims, but educational, and that at the time of specialization the children ought to be sent to various institutions, or at least to different sections. The future workmen should go to training schools, those for whom it is thought best to take musical or literary studies should be received in suitable boarding-schools, and when it is not possible for their families to help them, they should attend the public schools.

But in what does this educational manual work consist? many of our bewildered teachers ask. We have already seen in regard to the training of the hand, modeling and design, also in regard to object lessons. A school of work is the whole school and extra-school life. It may be added, for example, in the case of girls, that my pupils learned gladly and quickly after the preparatory exercises of hand and mind, to knit, hem and sew, to make crocheted scarfs. Someone even began embroidery, although the school lasted only four years. Their rapid progress astonished their older companions, but we were not surprised, since it followed the right preliminary method.

(1)

In America blind women sew on the machine. Among us the

(1) Recently I met at Cagliari the blind Giovanni Marongiu, son of a dressmaker, who for many years has assisted his mother by sewing on the machine the work which she has prepared. Some time ago he gave up this work and engaged in a small business which pays better. At the institution in Lecce the teaching of machine sewing has been begun with results that in a short time proved better than had been expected.

machine for making hosiery is being used more and more. The ^{Colosimo} Paolo Golesio Institution for the Blind in Naples has started the work of weaving with semi-mechanical looms. But however few or many the kinds of work accessible to the blind, elementary education should not be concerned with them. Let the children merely weave the baskets or hampers, re-cover chairs in straw or Indian cane. All this is good to learn and the variety gives delight and self-confidence. Let such work be done, however, occasionally for pastime, not actually with the continuity and attention which are required to gain the speed and accuracy of the workman.

In regard to the time which seems to be lost for the important purpose of professional specialization, this is a pure illusion, as I hope I have already shown, which corresponds to the similar objection of the music teachers. Here ~~xxxx~~ also we are confronted by the peremptory regulations of the law. Children may not engage in professional work before the age of twelve or fourteen. General skill for work, however, exactly what is achieved by educational work, prepares for the future workman much more valuable resources. It opens his mind to devise more intelligent expedients, to select and improve the instruments of work, above all to direct himself of his own accord toward the kind of work most suitable to his own capacity. Thus he becomes the best adviser and cooperator of his teachers ^{and} instructors, ceasing to be passive and applying himself with the diligence which comes from ^{the} a sense of responsibility of one who does not lay the blame on others if he does not succeed.

The active and responsible cooperation of the pupils in our case is all the more to be sought for the very reasons of less capacity for work and the fewer kinds of work accessible to blind workers. Only when we have in each case their intelligent

cooperation it will be found that even the number of occupations to which they can devote themselves with good results is much greater than has been imagined up to the present in the official catalogue of "trades and professions advisable for the blind."

This is not the place to dwell on this subject. It is enough to say that on the positive data of numerous facts ^{to} ~~at~~ my personal knowledge the majority of blind workmen or those engaged in small businesses ~~as~~ who have reached a certain comfort and economic independence do not apply themselves to the trade learned in the institution. They have used knowledge and ability acquired incidentally or purposely after having tested their own possibilities in relation with the necessities and the economic resources of their environment.

At all events, a single example will be sufficient to demonstrate how at times it is a question of very trifling expedients to enable a blind man to practise with good results a trade judged at first unsuitable for him. I have mentioned the teaching of weaving to the blind in the Paolo Colosimo Institution in Naples with semi-mechanical looms. It seems that this work pays sufficiently well and it is certainly easy and pleasant without requiring too much time to learn. The difficulty, which seemed insurmountable, is to notice when a thread in the warp breaks, and even if it is noticed, it is still more difficult to find it in the middle of the warp.

Professor Siro Missaglia, a teacher in the Royal School of Weaving in Naples, thought of the very simple expedient of putting over every thread of the warp a forked stick to which ^{a string} ~~is~~ attached underneath. If a thread is broken, the forked stick placed over it falls on two metal bars which are connected with the rheophores of an electric bell.

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The stick closes the circuit and the sound of the bell warns the operator that the thread is broken. He rises and runs his hand along the bars and quickly finds the stick. The empty space between the threads to which the sticks are attached makes him discover without delay the gap made in the warp by the broken thread. When the gap is found, it is no longer difficult to follow up the two ends to fasten them again. Missaglia's apparatus, so simple and not expensive, has been shown to be useful for sighted workers as well.

PLANS TO IMPROVE THE CONDITION OF THE INMATES BY PUTTING THEM TO WORK

In the agreement with the Directive Council of the hospice it had been arranged that I should give work to transform the asylum, as far as possible, into a house of work, so that the condition of the blind women and the old men should become economically better. This possibility was, however, so small that it would not be worth speaking of, if I were not impelled to do so by the remembrance of the warm and anxious hopes of those poor creatures, to whom, after all, work presented also the attraction of a means of passing the time more quickly.

I set some old men to weaving mats with thin strips of wood. They began with pleasure, but then raw material was lacking, also encouragement. It disturbed the community and the matter was deferred until new rooms that were planned should be built.

The old women made themselves very useful helping the servants, especially in doing the washing. At the institution in Lecce, the washing is done entirely by the ^{pupils} ~~nurses~~ with only the help of a sighted assistant. It was planned to make a more intelligent and broader use of these old women by starting chicken raising, with which some English and American blind have made money. Raising bees also has given very good results in these countries, and without going abroad, our own

Abele Ghidoni, whom I have already had occasion to praise, has made a successful experiment in this work at Rolo near Reggio Emilia.

The embroidery work of the young women inmates was not successful. We thought of having them make hosiery by machine, as had already been done with good results in the Roman workshop near by. We also thought of gardening, of making experiments to employ someone at telephone operating, typing, massage and other occupations, which today have been shown to be practical and remunerative, after the experiments made with the war blind.

The same difficulties made us defer all these innovations sine die. But how hope raises morale! Those poor creatures seemed to have become girls again. To dignify their existence with work, to feel themselves no longer a burden, to be able even to give some help to their needy families, to little nephews and nieces who could not be sufficiently fed ^{and} educated for lack of means! Blessed were the little ones to whom such a smiling future was opening. How the older girls reproved them when they were not very diligent, when they showed little gratitude for our care! Had they themselves found a tenth part of all this, how they would have treasured it!

The more immediate hope, however, so that all the inmates would have liked to work to reorganize ~~it~~ the institution, was that its increasing importance should contribute to hastening the difficult arrangement to secure the installation of a tramway from St. Peter's to the Madonna del Riposo. With this installation the prohibitive expense of a cab or the uncomfortable trip of more than an hour through dust or mud would no longer be necessary for their relatives to come to visit them, or for them to go out of that solitude. They longed for the solemn servantes of the basilicas, a little music, a little of the

bustle of surging life, to hear unaccustomed voices, to recall themselves to some dear one grown forgetful at a distance.

The tramway was available only at the end of the third year of the school, June 29, 1915. But in the first two years a great event preceded it, as an earnest of what was to come - the installation of electric light in the hospice. I reproduce an article published on that occasion. I reproduce it in full, because it was written in the institution in the emotion^{of the} joy that surrounded me, expressing the unanimous feeling of the community.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE INSTALLATION OF ELECTRIC LIGHT IN THE HOSPICE
FESTIVAL OF LIGHT IN AN INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND. From La Tribuna,
 September 25, 1913.

Some days ago electric light was installed in the Margherita Hospice for the Blind outside the Porta Cavalleggeri here in Rome, and it was a great holiday for the inmates. We found them waiting anxiously, the young ones especially. They were all together in the courtyard, and while the last valves were being attached and the meter placed in the end of the garden, those who had a remnant of sight announced ^{from} ~~for~~ time to time the lighting of a lamp. "But in the house, in the house, why does it not come yet?" And they lost patience, fixing their blind or half blind eyes on the darkness.

Suddenly the windows of one wing of the building were illuminated. "There, there!" cried some of the little girls. Those who saw and those who did not burst into loud applause. The handclappings and cries were renewed at every lighting and extinguishing of lamps. The rapid passing from darkness to light and from light to darkness were announced with great delight by those who could see and the others applauded in accord

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
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 report of the officers and directors for the year
 1900, and to express its appreciation of the
 services rendered by them. The report shows that
 the company has during the year 1900, made
 considerable progress in the development of its
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indifferent to brightness and darkness. Then they dispersed through the rooms, each one with part sight guiding a group. Those who could not see turned the switches and were informed of the effect by their companions. Some old men murmured apart, "What does light matter to us, who are blind? They might at least moisten it with a drink." But one who was more cultivated and refined said, "The light is for those who must serve, who see for us. A better time is beginning even for us poor blind."

My spirit was greatly moved. It seemed to me that I was present at a mystic ceremony. I thought of that rite of Easter Even, when a brazier is lighted outside the dark church and then one candle slowly after another, while the Lumen Christi is sung. There the people see and understand little or nothing, ~~yet~~ here the blind rejoice, understanding without seeing. I should have liked to have present all those who still keep away through a kind of pity now outmoded from these centres of spiritual light, from these institutions which are being transformed from asylums into houses of work, from places of physical and moral torpor into schools and centres of thought and civic virtue. This is an affecting place, yes; we blind ourselves are frequently moved, but these are emotions which raise the spirit, heal the nerves.

The simple-minded pity of our fathers avoided even naming light and ~~the~~ color in the presence of a blind person.

"Do not tell me that morning is returning

To awaken sleeping things.

Do not tell me that the borders of the shining sky

Are gold and ruby."

Today the young blind love to visit even exhibitions of paintings in the company of a faithful eye. They love journeys, they grasp, by means of sensations unknown or neglected by others, numerous expressions of what might be called the spirit of the landscapes, of works of art and of physical beauty. But our chief resource is always to be held in intimate social esteem. "Do you see? What do you see? Now I understand, I see too, I feel."

Unless blindness is a hereditary defect, perhaps imaginative habits, **psychic sympathies**, are so strong in the race that the slightest stimuli are sufficient to call into function these congenital activities. Perhaps, as it seems to me, the sentiment of sociability is the strongest and deepest in man, the political animal, and the blind man only adds to this the faith of eyes, of which he feels the lack and need.

Therefore all systems of life and education are disadvantageous to us which tend, although from pity otherwise delicate and to be respected, to isolate the blind from common life, whether keeping them shut up or removing from them the difficulties of ordinary life through fear of giving them annoyance. The real and chief annoyance of the blind man is idleness, solitude and the lack of ~~two~~ speaking eyes.

The Queen of Roumania, Carmen Sylva, proclaimed throughout the world an ~~understanding~~ undertaking of her own, certainly a pious one: - to gather all the blind in a special city, constituted and built according to the needs of their condition, in such a way that they could move and exercise all their activities freely without the humiliating presence of those who have the superiority of sight. A poetic account has even appeared of the first nucleus of this new

There are four kinds of men in the world who are called by the name of "philosophers". The first kind is the man who is called by the name of "philosophers" because he is a philosopher. The second kind is the man who is called by the name of "philosophers" because he is a philosopher. The third kind is the man who is called by the name of "philosophers" because he is a philosopher. The fourth kind is the man who is called by the name of "philosophers" because he is a philosopher.

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city, which of course is not ^{becoming} ~~surprising to be~~ and could not be anything, as we had already predicted, but a very modest asylum of poor ignorant blind people. ~~For~~ more intelligently aware of the real need, Queen Margherita has become the founder of the transformation of the hospice founded forty years ago in her name, into a modern school and house of work.

With His Eminence Don Leopoldo Torlonia as president and with the support of the government, this is the school in which the installation of electric light was celebrated, and perhaps no symbol could better represent the program. The schools in which the blind are educated in Italy and elsewhere, are already numerous enough and have given some excellent results. Almost all had their origin in generous impulses and though they are still lacking in scientific skill, we may be sure that they will be able to restore many more blind persons, redeemed from misfortune, to social life, when there has been established a system of education corresponding better to the difficulties to be overcome and the end to be reached.

Not the least cause of the greater progress of the English schools is certainly the fact that for some time several of them have been entrusted to blind directors. It is indeed very difficult for one who has sight to understand exactly the conditions and the special attitudes of those who do not see.

This is the service which the new school proposes to render modestly to the other praiseworthy ones already existing. The director is blind, called an exception because he has ^{for} ~~on~~ his part succeeded in freeing himself from the difficulties of his

condition, winning a doctor's degree, a chair in a university and a modest reputation. He proposes to complete the pious work from which his success ~~resulted~~ ^{resulted}, generalizing the system which he has followed with a faith which may have seemed audacious. But it was not audacious, because it was founded on intimate experience and direct knowledge of the condition of the blind. If ~~it were necessary to~~ ^{I had to} formulate my system in a motto, I should express it thus: - Audere prudenter.

Dare wisely, but always ^{dare} to do all that is done by those who see. Take no other goal, no other ~~motto~~ ^{model}, than common life. Sharpen individual initiative with this continual vision. Never eliminate ~~the~~ difficulties, on the contrary gradually create the greatest possibilities in school, to anticipate those of life. Excite all activities in order to have all the greatest compensations for the sense that is lacking. Above all teach the art of winning the eyes of others with the spirit of observation and amiability.

I return to the point where I began. Say then " ... that morning is returning to awaken sleeping things." Tell the blind man all that you see, not limiting yourself to outbursts of empty exclamations, but with the most descriptive words that you know, with simple words suggested to you spontaneously by the very thing itself that you see. Enable him to have the knowledge of your experience and then pity him no more. He will be content, he will be no longer blind, because you see for him. What marvellous experiments scientists have made which we enjoy and admire merely by faith! Who can verify for himself all that has been taught him? For my part, must I confess it? when I am among people who see, except in case they are discourteous people, I never feel distress about my blindness. But when on the other hand I am among other blind persons, then I am seized by a sadness and pity for

myself and for them that is very painful. To stretch out one's hand to another and not meet his, especially among the blind grown torpid in hospices, to drop something and, among so many, not to succeed in finding it, to have a printed page and not know what it says ... It is fortunate that often we finally laugh among ourselves with a calm philosophy, which comes fundamentally from being ~~and~~ all, however great or small we may be, sons of charity.

Put you who can make your sight more precious by sharing it lovingly with him who lacks it, do not keep away from the blind. The first impression only is painful, just until the trust in your words brings the smile to their faces, and then, believe me, they are no longer blind. Hanging on your lips, spying with attentive ear your every gesture, every breath, they will share every one of your emotions. They will love everything that you love, shudder at everything that disturbs you. In what way will they feel the beauty of a starry sky, of a picture, a face, a lively scene? In their own way, and what does it matter? Each one feels in his own way, and the different sensorial path perhaps adds little to the profound psychic diversities by which each one's characteristic way of feeling is determined. Gabriele D'Annunzio in The Dead City has divined and expressed with the utmost beauty and truth this strange attitude of the blind of identifying themselves with ^{their} interlocutors.

The desire to see, which among those who see I had no occasion to feel, assailed me strongly the other evening returning home from that remarkable festival of light.

To become the light of the eyes, an angel watching every hour over ~~so~~ many unfortunate companions, I who know what warm gratitude this brings, felt ^{there} ~~it~~ was no longer here a pure and noble dream. But perhaps

for me this desire is more hedonistic than generous. Perhaps it is more useful for me to continue to encourage my companions by example and perseverance and to try new paths of going out of darkness with them. At any rate it is necessary to make a virtue of necessity. Angels of charity are not lacking and will not lack to make our light.

For in this device the more immediately the device is
 used, the more the device is used, the more the device is used.
 The device is used in the same way as the device is used.
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Educational Report of the Year 1912 - 1913

To Senator Duke Torlonia, President of the Margherita of Savoy Hospice for the Blind in Rome.

Excellency,

The report dated June 28, 1912, which I had the honor to present to you on the experiment which I began on April 18th of the same year in this hospice, and the program which following this experiment I submitted for your consideration and that of the Council, comprised three branches of activity: - the preparatory and elementary school for blind children, the special training school for teachers who wish to devote themselves to the education of the blind, and the study of methods to improve the moral and material condition of the inmates of the hospice with some dignified and profitable work.

The approbation and encouragement given me by the Council, the frequent visits of Your Excellency, who wished to follow personally the progress of our school, the interest and the two visits of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and the sympathy of various distinguished persons who waited with faith in the instruction and work for the deliverance of the unfortunates in darkness, have been, so to speak, the life-giving oxygen of my work, winning constantly the cooperation and confidence of the pupils and of the reverend sisters in charge of the hospice.

The pupils of the school have increased from five to eleven during the course of the year. Three of these have taken the final examinations at the Edmondo De Amicis School, winning promotion to the fourth class with higher marks than the

FOREIGN POLICY - 1947-1948 - 1949

The foreign policy of the Government of India during the period 1947-1948-1949 was characterized by the following features:

1. Non-alignment

2. Peace

3. Cooperation with the United Nations

4. Support for the independence of the colonies

5. Support for the economic development of the underdeveloped countries

6. Support for the cultural and educational cooperation between the nations

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sighted girls. Seven others have been examined by a commission of teachers of the same public school, who came to the hospice on the 16th and 17th of the current month. Six were promoted from the first to the second class, the seventh was kept back for reading and writing. I thought it more suitable to invite the commission to the hospice rather than to take these little girls to the public school, as it had been agreed to attach special importance to some subjects not included in the government program, because of the exigencies of the special physical and psychic development of the blind children and of the conditions in which they appeared at the beginning of the course. The lack of sight indeed assists application to those studies which do not need the help of the senses and of concrete ideas, but on the other hand presents resistance and grave and apparently insurmountable difficulties for other forms of activity. From recent examinations also we have convincing proof. All have been promoted in arithmetic, although they were examined in a program almost double that of the government program. In reading and writing they may be considered on a par with the public school girls of the same age.

Since I found great difficulties in the course and in directing it freely, I made from it subjects for examination, telling the pupils to attach the greatest importance to these. Another subject for examination, introduced with great preparation to stimulate activity and emulation, has been manual work, in which are included modeling, ^{drawing} ~~design~~ of simple geometric figures, writing letters and words freehand, building with sticks and wires, and various other kindergarten exercises, from which are learned

those innumerable little positions of the hand which serve for all the affairs of practical life. Others are educated in this respect first or spontaneously by the eyes, while many blind persons are embarrassed or incapable all their lives, unless they have been insistently trained.

The outcome of the examinations has been very satisfactory, as the unanimous vote shows. But it is fair to add that I persuaded the examiners and watched myself that they should not be influenced by the special conditions to be indulgent, but that they should follow the standards used for ordinary children, and also make a report that would be educationally instructive. Later it was necessary to cite in explanation of the marks generally being the highest, the fact that our little girls are almost all older than the children who attend the same class, that they have in the institution a regular and unified life, above all that the lack of sight brings a precocious concentration and gravity, which indeed must be restrained by their teachers.

Three children have been worthy of special mention and deserve a special prize if your Excellency should wish to honor them: Adele Bastianelli, who entered July 16, 1912, who made a rather poor record in the work of the first class at home, and who has succeeded in placing herself on the level of her abler companions and now has passed the final examinations; Elena Fazi, who entered on April 8th last semester, ^{and} ~~who~~ has in three months gone through the first class with honor, and still more remarkable, Renata Barbarotti, only eight years old, who entered on May 1st and was not only promoted but in some subjects was better than any of her companions. Costantina Panettoni, who entered last

December, has also made good progress. Anita Eliseo, who has been in the hospice for several years, has a lively intelligence but cannot resist the desire for attention and has a morbidly nervous temperament, for which she should have special treatment. One child has not been examined, Annunziata Ziotti, who entered on April 19th in a very bad physical and mental condition.

There were four teachers who came this year to work in the hospice, Elena and Maria Coletta, Elena and Francesca Matteini. From their zeal and activity the children have got advantageously just what is most difficult to obtain in blind children - ease and aptitude for observing and thinking as in normal life. As to the advantage of the young teachers, I must confess that for this first year, since transportation was lacking and the course was given in family fashion for various reasons of prudence and internal order, perhaps the good they have brought our school is greater than what they have received, at least in concrete form that can be stated. I hope next year to systematize this part of our plan also with a course of lessons on theory and to make the hours and methods of the practical lessons more regular, now that the school for the children is started.

The two interne assistants, Sister Cennarina Tancredi and Pasqualina Trancassini (blind), have devoted themselves to the school with zeal and good will. Pasqualina besides is naturally endowed with excellent aptitude for teaching and much wisdom, hence she deserves to be mentioned for special consideration, if Your Excellency wishes to give her some mark of esteem.

Other inmates have made themselves useful to the school, some transcribing, other binding books, also helping to direct the newcomers and teaching the elements of music to the children. A

custom that I found in the hospice and which deserves praise and encouragement is this:- each of the little girls is entrusted to a grown one who cares for her like a mother, teaches her to wash and dress herself, make her bed and do other housework, helps her at table and recreation and admonishes her with kindness. This plan serves to fill the hearts of these poor girls with a loving family feeling and trains the children to gentleness and gratitude. Among the old men and women also I have noted on the whole good feeling and great joy when they have some occupation.

Thanks to the regulation wisely made by Your Excellency to arrange my rights and duties in harmony with the internal order of the hospice and the good will with which this regulation has been received by the reverend sisters, I hope to be able to give, another year, the satisfaction of fuller results in the activity of these poor inmates.

Another branch which deserves special attention is the music school. Some young inmates have shown special talent for music and have arrived at a point in their studies where they should be entrusted to some capable teacher to prepare them to take a legal diploma, which would serve not only as a satisfaction to themselves and an honor to the institution, but would also help them to find employment. This year we have had the good fortune to have a most zealous teacher who gave his services free, Mr. Carlo Grimandi, my very dear friend. But he has neglected his own work too much during this time. Now that we have seen the good results obtained thanks to the work of a good teacher and the good will of the pupils, it would be wrong not to continue.

But let us hope that good soil will come no less than good seed.

Meantime I may well state as a fact, if only to increase our faith, the progress made in so short a time in singing, taste, musical culture and technique of the piano and the harmonium. Her Majesty the Queen Mother expressed admiration on her last visit and Your Excellency was good enough to give personal confirmation and praise.

We have had also another useful and generous helper in musical progress, Miss Peteani, a pupil of Sgambati, who kindly came to give musical lectures and piano lessons. I wish to bring to Your Excellency's attention the kindness of this able young woman.

The results which this year have rewarded your confidence and that of the Council and our good will are, however, very small in face of the needs which the very ground we have covered discloses.

Permit me, Excellency, to sum up the needs for which our good will is not sufficient, but which it will not be useless to recommend to public and private beneficence. On account of the distance of the hospice from the city, a cab or omnibus service is necessary to start the greatly desired day school. Also the school of special preparation and apprenticeship for those who wish to devote themselves to the instruction of the blind, a school the absolute lack of which in the whole of Italy has been deplored for so many years. Now that it has been founded by this honored Council with the concurrence of the Ministry of the Interior, it is attracting the great and confident hopes on the part of all the blind and of those who care for their betterment. This school cannot develop unless the means of access are made easy. The school for the preparation of teachers of deaf mutes at Milan has a number of free scholarships for the best students, as has the school at Naples. We shall be glad to give these students transportation when the tramway is finished. This transportation

is also indispensable to take the blind from the hospice to the city for the purpose of instruction. The teaching material, much more expensive for a school for the blind, is a little below that of a rural school.

The music school would need at least one good piano and a harmonium. It would be necessary also to make provision for having the students who have shown marked ability complete their musical studies. It would be possible to reduce the expense greatly by taking them to have lessons in the city. But then the question of transportation arises again, without mentioning the fact that it will be difficult to have the continuous and regular work of a capable teacher without offering at least a fair salary.

Excellency, do not call me troublesome for asking all these things. I know well that you lack neither zeal nor power. But of course time is needed to go softly, wisely and far. To point out the most urgent needs is my duty, as well as that of trying to get the greatest profit from the means already obtained.

This is perhaps the best way of attracting new help, if it were possible to increase the wish to forbear with me. There has been no lack of goodwill or desire to respond to your confidence and that of the Council, of Her Majesty the Queen Mother, of His Excellency the Minister of the Interior, and of the other good people who have given me their encouragement.

With greatest respect, allow me to remain,

Your most obedient,

Augusto Romagnoli .

Rome, July 19, 1913

Educational Report of the Year 1913 - 1914

To Senator Duke Leopoldo Torlonia, President of the Margherita of Savoy Hospice for the Blind in Rome,

Excellency,

A year ago I had the honor to present to you a report, with the pleasure of winning your approval and that of the distinguished Council of Administration, as well as that of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and the Ministry of the Interior, from whose favor and help the new school derives most of its support and hope. This report ended by pointing out the most urgent necessities to complete the desired program for the growth of the school and also the moral and material improvement of the inmates of the hospice by giving them some occupation. Various circumstances which you know well have deferred our hope until the coming year. This hope has not been lessened, however, by involuntary delay. On the contrary, everything ~~gives~~ gives confidence that there will soon be a broad and ardent movement on behalf of our institution, as Your Excellency was good enough to have published in the newspapers an announcement ~~of~~ of the recent visit of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and her highly encouraging satisfaction.

While waiting then for means and equipment to be granted to extend my modest work and bring into effect the section for boys, the workshop for adult inmates, the day school and whatever other improvement it may please you and the Council to undertake, I have tried within the limits of my personal abilities and the means available to strengthen and increase the school.

Whereas there were five little girls two years ago, the number rose to eleven at the end of the school year 1912 - 1913. Now there are eighteen, to be increased by seven during this year,

and there would be many more if the lack of space had not prevented. The children who last year could be divided into two groups have had to be divided this year into three, with a special group formed for the new children received at the hospice. The oldest have followed the fourth year elementary course and went to take the final examinations at the ~~public school~~ ^{Public School;} Edmondo De Amicis, all obtaining high marks, so as to win exemption from fees. The children promoted last year from the first to the second class have passed the promotion examinations into the third, except two kept back in arithmetic, whom, however, it will not be difficult to promote in October. I enclose the list of marks won by the children in examinations, and in conduct.

I should have liked to send them also to a public school for the promotion examinations from the second to the third class, but I was prevented from doing so partly because of the lack of easy transportation, because of the distance of the institution from Rome, and the fact that the final examinations were held at the same time, partly because of the fact that the group of children who had been in this class was very heterogeneous. Some would have done very well, others would have been exposed to a humiliation that would have been certain and not ^{admissible at this} ~~suitable for the~~ ^{time.} So I invited a commission of teachers of the ~~public school~~ ^{Public School} Umberto I, and the children of the second class were examined at the hospice.

The new children received this year have not yet begun the elementary school, since they came from the country in a very bad state of health, on account of which it has been necessary to keep them under medical care for several months. They are so neglected

and incapable that they are still fatigued by being trained to move about and to acquire the aptitudes of pre-school life. They constitute almost a kindergarten class, although the youngest is already over seven. They are an additional proof of the misfortune that it is for the blind, especially poor country people, not to be removed early from the ignorance and heedless indifference of their families to begin their education in time in a special institution. In this way they are losing the best years.

To assist the new group of little girls another inmate has been used, Elvira Georgi, who has attended to her duties with much pleasure and sufficient teaching ability. The second class was taken by Pasqualina Trancassini, who had the first class last year. She is not at all lacking this year in devotion and industry, but it will be necessary to help her in a special way, to refresh and increase her knowledge, since she has never been able to complete a course of regular studies and is prevented by the community life of the inmates of the hospice from keeping herself in the current of culture and life necessary for a teacher. Sister Gennarina Tancredi has held, as last year, the office of assistant in the school and has substituted in teaching the fourth class, which was undertaken and admirably conducted by a teacher, Miss Pice Tincani.

The training school for teachers who wish to fit themselves under my direction for teaching the blind has also this year given remarkable results. Miss Elena Coletta deserves special praise for application and excellent teaching ability. The following have also attended with devotion:- The Misses Elena and Francesca Matteini and Miss Gualfarda Ferrero, daughter of Baron Augusto Ferrero,

who although she has not completed her normal studies, has worked hard, supplementing study with keen insight and enthusiasm. The attendance of the apprentice teachers has been especially useful for the outdoor games, in which the vigilance of many eyes is necessary to train the children to walk and to find their way separately in the various parts of the villa, even those that are ~~the~~ less used. This branch of the training school rightly seemed the most important to Your Excellency, because, besides being an advantage to the school, from it may come the extension of our system into other institutions for the blind, and it deserves special study and increase. I shall permit myself to submit to Your Excellency next autumn a project which is being developed in regard to this matter.

For the music school we have not been fortunate^{enough}/this year to have a volunteer teacher and have lacked the means to get a paid one. So we have taken advantage of the help of those inmates who know music and of a good sister, Sister Carmelina Riparbelli, who have attended to the elementary teaching of the piano to the best of their ability. Although I do not know music well enough to teach it, but have had fortunately sufficient training to judge it, I am convinced that in art it is better to do nothing than to cultivate bad taste. Therefore while waiting for funds to establish the music school suitably in the hospice, I have preferred not to occupy myself with it, prudently avoiding occasions both of disapproval and discouragement. I am very glad, however, that the Council intends next year to make thorough provision for musical education also, all the more because several pupils show promising talent.

Excellency, I feel myself deeply conscious of the responsibility which weighs upon me as well as the high honor entrusted to me.

From my work ~~xxxxxx~~ something more should rightly be expected than an empirical school for the blind on the level of others already existing not without honor among us. Just at this time His Excellency the Minister of the Interior has been kind enough to grant me a subsidy to take part in an international meeting of the blind and visit some schools in foreign countries. I think it my duty therefore to point out explicitly the characteristic, so to speak, of my educational method. It is not, after all, my own innovation or a new thing, especially in the schools for English and American blind, where the best results have already been obtained. Blindness is still considered among us as an irreparable misfortune, and in accordance with this conviction, the instruction given to the blind is most frequently a matter of comfort and ornament rather than a remedy and support for life.

Blindness naturally induces a certain precocity of intelligence, resulting in physical injury and a tendency toward the abstract to the disadvantage of the practical. Our schools indulge this proclivity, indeed often incite it in the pious belief that there is nothing better to do. From this onesidedness there results a serious lack of balance in development. The children give excellent results in the primary schools, but they grow physically weak with such intellectual and moral defects that they seldom fulfil in life the promise of their early years. Without neglecting their natural aptitudes, on the contrary striving to direct them in the best possible way, my chief solicitude has been to develop the tendencies that are most deadened and those that are, so to speak, curative. It gave me the utmost satisfaction to hear Her Majesty the Queen Mother on her recent visit to our school graciously observe that the new education on the foundation of physical training had remarkably increased the animation

of the girls' faces and their health. It is exactly on this foundation that we can give the blind a vigorous constitution, capable of enduring without nervous collapse the exhausting labor of adaptation and sensorial and psychic compensation on which depends the possibility of triumphing over misfortune.

To teach the blind reading, writing and music is something that any teacher can do easily. But to refine their sensibilities, arouse their imagination in a way that is not fantastic but ordered and practical, train them to orientation and to move expeditiously, not to be awkward and strange in the world of those who see, but to understand, if only in a reflected way, the sensations of its arts, to participate intimately and actively in its life, are things which involve a certain fatigue and above all a certain attitude. Therefore the greatest wish of all our congresses is to have a school in which special teachers of the blind may be prepared, without false pity or vain illusion, but full of wisdom and faith and trained by concepts and experiences that are not empirical.

In order that blind pupils may not suffer from the effort to refine attention and the senses by which, for example, we seek to bring about the substitution of hearing for sight in many perceptions, we endeavor to give all the exercises the appearance of play. Likewise in the training of the hand and the formation of concrete and precise ideas, a large place is given, always in the form of play and free work, to modeling, geometric ^{drawing} ~~design~~ and building with bits of wood and wire. After this preparation every study becomes easy and the spirit of personal initiative keen. Besides geometric drawing ~~design~~ I have found that of animals and other easy objects very useful, taking care, however, to have it done in ^{the most} ~~a more~~ schematic form. Above all topographic exercises and sketches are useful, either copied ~~from reality~~

from relief maps or deduced from places personally known. This helps to develop that form of memory which psychologists call the motor type and which is the chief resource of the blind to orient themselves in walking safely alone. Your Excellency will remember that kind of exercises to which you were pleased to lend special attention during the last visit of Her Majesty the Queen Mother. The children trace in walking the outline of the villa, that of Italy and shapes of letters and animals, and form, so to speak, auditory groups, arranging themselves simultaneously according to a given design and calling to each other in turn. They are like auditory pictures in which the forms are brought ^{out} by sounds instead of by colors.

Not to lengthen my report unduly, I will conclude with a piece of news which certainly will please you. The Ministry of Instruction, in view of the onesided preparation which has been given until now to the blind in our schools, and to make it possible to confer on them legal diplomas, has arranged by a special circular that they may be excused from physical training and drawing and the girls from domestic work. Our children, on the contrary, have regularly taken these examinations, receiving good marks. On the other hand, since drawing is not a subject for the final examination, I have asked the examining commission to take advantage of the examination in arithmetic to insist especially on the representation of geometric figures and also on some little geographic plan. This has been a small triumph for our pupils and has created an excellent impression on the teachers. Making things easy and giving favors in examinations result in detriment to practical preparation and to the esteem which will be given to blind professional workers in life, where competition is not

indeed disposed to concede much to misfortune. The public wishes to know, and rightly, in regard to a blind professional man, whether to give him interest or charity. And only when we have trained our pupils not to beg indulgence and special favors in school, shall we cease to turn them into "returned soldiers out of work."

Deserving of special gratitude and consideration is the gift which Her Majesty the Queen Mother has been good enough to make to our school, the machine for printing in Braille invented by Mr. Brignoli. This machine already occupies usefully one inmate or another of the hospice. We hope to realize one of the most fervent desires of the educated blind, that of a national press which will give good books at a low price.

Excellency, as I add up the total, the economic resources of the school are not the greatest. But following the impulse of piety and faith, this total seems to me to respond in the best way to your generous confidence, to the dignity of the school and of the one who protects it with authority.

Accept my best wishes and deepest respect.

Yours most obedient,

Augusto Romagnoli.

Rome, July 26, 1914

lowest of the world's mountains. The hills were so
low, and gently sloping, that it was possible to walk
up them without any special effort. The only way to reach the
summit was to go through the narrow, winding path which led
up the side of the mountain. The path was so steep and
narrow that it was almost impossible to walk up it.

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PART THIRD

THE SECOND TWO YEARS OF THE SCHOOL. THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING SCHOOL

To summarize:- of the three branches of activity which according to the agreement with the Directive Council were to develop at the hospice, in the first two years the school for children could be said to be regularly constituted and very promising, but it could not be said that the training school was constituted. The transformation of the asylum into a house of work was still in votis and with little hope of realization.

I decided privately therefore to interest myself in the poor inmates only in so far as this could help the school, not from indifference but for obvious reasons of prudence. The outburst of the European war that summer also threatened serious financial embarrassment. My first care therefore was to get the help of the Ministry of Public Instruction to assure regular teachers to the school and to prepare teachers who would spread the reform into other institutions.

The Director General of Primary Instruction at that time was Camillo Corradini, who already in various circumstances had shown solicitude for improving the instruction of the blind. Granting my request, he ordered the Inspector of Rome to send a member of his staff to my school. Cavaliere Enrico D'Andrea was entrusted with this duty, and on his recommendation a subsidy was granted to the hospice to be used as scholarships for study. These were to be conferred by competition upon two teachers with diplomas who wished to fit themselves for teaching the blind and would agree to attend our school regularly as apprentice teachers under my direction.

Thus I was assured of two suitable helpers who would devote

themselves entirely to the girls for a school year without undue sacrifice. After another inspection the subsidy was renewed and increased the next year.

The introduction of regular teachers, however, ~~though~~ although only as apprentices, made relations more difficult with the sisters entrusted with assisting and keeping order. I had not failed to repeat my request to the General of the Order for two suitable sisters and I was disposed to admit them even without competition, but I was told that there were no qualified sisters. Then there was a great struggle of patience, all the more because of the death on August 10, 1915, of the old Superior, Sister Giacinta Troglia, who was fond of the girls and also of me, and though she grumbled like a good nun, always ended by supporting me.

The competition for the two scholarships was published in a circular by the President of the hospice, who announced that I would give a course of ten lessons on the education of the blind in the hall of the Biblioteca Femminile on the Piazza Picosia. All elementary teachers were invited, and of those who desired to take the competitive examination no requirement was made, in addition to the elementary diploma, except attendance on this course. The examination would be on subjects of pedagogy and general teaching.

The course was opened by the Inspector of Public Studies, Commendatore Ferruccio Martini, in the name of the Director General of Primary Instruction on December 26, 1914. The first three lessons were a summary according to my views of the pedagogy which is taught in the normal schools with special reference to our case. That is, I showed that a person who is well prepared ought not to see in the pedagogy of the blind a pedagogy sui generis, but cases for

application of ordinary pedagogy. Blindness does not necessarily alter or paralyze any faculty of the mind, although it closes the easiest and quickest way of development. The fourth and fifth lessons gave a history of our education, of the principal institutions and of some famous blind people. In the sixth lesson I satisfied the legitimate curiosity of the auditors by speaking of my own education and that of my companions in the secondary school. The seventh, eighth and ninth lessons were an exposition of the method I used in the hospice school in preparation for a visit to the place. The last lesson was given to answering questions and to summarizing.

The lessons were very well attended and the later ones better than the first, a fact which suggested that it would be useful to give these short courses frequently, even in connection with ordinary normal schools. A similar course had been given for some years at Naples by the excellent blind teacher Gennaro Giannini. This had not only a notable result as propaganda, but also as efficient pedagogy for teachers not concerned with teaching the blind. Indeed, as pathology is the best study to illuminate physiology, so the pedagogy of the abnormal is the most likely to produce suitable thought about the ordinary. "We do not know the good till we have lost it," says one proverb, and another, "Without disorder one cannot make order." Urged by curiosity and keener attention because of observation of the abnormal, teachers notice many truths and problems not seen at first or fruitlessly postponed in the exercise of ordinary professional work.

To learn Braille and the other little special expedients of our schools is something that a teacher can do in a short time. But when he comes to an examination with this skill, it seems to him that he is already half prepared. The whole difficulty of preparation for a

teacher of the blind consists in getting accustomed to identify himself with their special way of feeling and perceiving, in estimating in every real contingency, without undue optimism or pessimism, the resources of each one, naturally contracted or capable of development with suitable expedients.

On the façade of the great institution for war blind at St. Dunstan's near London, founded by the famous ^{Sir Arthur} ~~Nx.~~ Pearson, is the inscription, "Here men learn to be blind." Dr. Aurelio Nicolodi, whose competence on this subject cannot be doubted, since he was blinded in the war and by common consent of the Italian blind is President of their National Union, says that the only condition of truly understanding what the blind can feel or do is not to have sight. Also Helen Keller's greatest trial is that her biographers insist on discussing what she can enjoy among the wonders of creation.

Should we desire then that our friends should experience blindness to understand us? By no means. After all, they would not be able to make up for our blindness with the inestimable help of their eyes. We only desire that by the precious help which they give us, they may not wish to make us undergo their prejudices concerning us. Too much pitied or admired, we are always esteemed a little more or less than we deserve. Even those familiar with us for many years frequently show fear or wonder quite out of place.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CONCEPT OF PREPARATION FOR TEACHERS OF THE BLIND

The only preparation that I understand then is having persons equipped with the necessary general pedagogic training live intimately for a certain period with blind children to be educated under the direction

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of experienced blind to whom they can turn ^{at} every moment for imitation and advice. Nor do I mean by experienced blind, those who have made a perfect success or are extraordinary. An experienced blind man is even one who has been able to learn his deficiencies too late to correct them, but not too late to put on guard others who have the ability and culture necessary to point out the remedies.

All other theoretical preparation is in danger of doing more harm than good, since it increases the number of people who read or write and think they are accomplishing something. While the secret of the good teacher can be communicated by means of custom and example, it can not be taught. When there were no academies of fine arts and artists were taught as artisans are still taught today, in workshops, the arts flourished. And if we should at last return to the glorious tradition of our country for pedagogy also, considering it less as science and more as art, in this will be the solution of the much agitated problem of education.

The chief reason for the superiority of the English institutions for the blind consists in the fact that they are directed by blind persons, while the teaching personnel is preferably sighted. The teachers are thus between the director who gives the norm and the pupils who are effectively attracted by this example. With us, on the contrary, and also in France and Germany, the directors are sighted. The teachers, usually blind, little heeded by the administrative councils, poorly paid, associate therefore more or less consciously with the pupils in their needs and defects. Thus constant confirmation is given to the prejudice of the fruitlessness of our education and also another strange prejudice, not rare among our teachers, that the blind are ungrateful.

I should like to tell the efforts of my incomparable blind teacher and of many able friends to bring about innovations and get indispensable material, to have books or at least readers, to have zealous sighted assistants. But the directors of the institutions, although willing, have to think above all of the administration, of a reputation that will attract gifts. The directive councils therefore select them almost always from persons who have good relationships, rather than teaching preparation. When they make themselves liked, their subordinates have respect and gratitude for them, but the teachers do not feel them competent to direct them and the pupils do not experience that effective emulation with which each repeats in his heart, "I will become like him!"

In accordance with these standards, we arranged that even the title of qualification which the Ministry of Instruction promised to strengthen with its recognition would not be given after the examination in theory, but on the favorable report of the director of the school after a certain period of attendance and on the basis of results and daily observations registered in the school record.

Two or three hours a week were definitely given to conferences between the director and the apprentices, besides occasional short conferences every day. The ~~pm~~ regular conferences and lessons, rather than to develop a program fixed beforehand,

I should like to see the reports of the Commission.

London has of course been very busy in the last few months.

The first Commission report, in fact, is not yet out.

There is a great deal of interest in the Commission's work.

Of the Commission, it is generally said that it is very active.

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had for object to give opportunity to the apprentice teachers to express their appreciation and their problems, and to the director opportunity to show them how to order ^{their} ~~there~~ experiences, referring them to general pedagogical principles. If a subject was lacking, we read some book on the psychology of the blind, taking from it material for discussion on the basis of our experiences. Or I assigned the apprentices books to read at home, their observations on which they reported to me. This procedure, not very regular at first, became regular the second year. I planned to make it the subject of a publication, when the school ended and the desire and the time to write decreased.

My chief care was to watch that the teaching of each subject should be intimately related to that of the others. I showed frequent examples to the teachers, giving myself, in their presence, little lessons to the pupils by apparently participating occasionally in their conversation.

The pupils ought to feel that they are working when they study and studying when they work. They ought also to organize recreation and find pleasure in school hours. I have already pointed out the error of wishing to discipline them prematurely, but this does not at all mean to indulge their caprices and laziness. They ought not to feel the will of the teacher against them, but a law of necessity which the teacher is the first to obey. These things are obvious to anyone who knows a little pedagogy, at least it is obvious to say them. But in practice, when the children do not feel unity in the variety of subjects taught, and are enthusiastic about that in which they have most satisfaction and think they gain little from the others,

to which they apply themselves only under compulsion, therefore with less result, we see the anomalies of premature specialization. Or it happens that the bolder children think they can violate the rules with impunity, because these rules are felt to be arbitrary for anyone able to elude vigilance.

If such problems are serious for all pupils, they are the more serious for the blind, whose spontaneous education is more restricted. The ways of remedy and adaptation in life are more restricted also.

To dare with prudence, the motto which I have said above was that of our school, did not make disobedience possible, so to speak, except in things which the community itself unanimously condemned, since the example of audacity came from the head and the pupils knew that they had an ally in the director against the sighted teachers, who were excessively timid and formal. So teachers and pupils were at odds about activities, and also the timidity and the different point of view of the sisters were used to advantage. The latter represented that section of the public which, full of distrust and disposed to pity, expected the closing of the institution. Even a slight imprudence would have made us lose liberty and much ground. Criticisms were always the order of the day.

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SCHOOL

Now I could count on the constant assistance of at least one teacher for the morning session as well as the afternoon. The midday recreation could also be organized, since the teacher who attended the morning session remained at the institution until evening. She had her luncheon during the dinner of the inmates, and also had time to rest after their recreation when they retired to the

to which they have been subjected, and which

will, however, be not the subject of a separate chapter.

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dormitory. The games were greatly developed. The little girls especially were more cared for, because while the group of big girls spent the morning in studying and doing arithmetic with the help of the blind assistants and the sister, the apprentice teacher went into the garden or the passageway with the little ones.

In the afternoon session, when both the apprentices were there, and frequently also a volunteer helper, the girls were subdivided into three or four groups and each group set to the most suitable exercises. I passed from one group to another, now assisting, now giving example. Furthermore it was possible to take the girls into the city much oftener to visit churches, villas and shops. I owe special gratitude to the firm of Bianchelli, which with great courtesy put its bazaar at our disposal that ~~they~~ the girls might touch there at their leisure every sort of object.

These excursions were generally made in this way: - two or three girls at ~~at~~ a time, never more than four, so as not to be conspicuous, went to the city accompanied by a teacher and the sister. Here, for the first times, I unfailingly accompanied them, together with a person who acted as my secretary. My presence increased the caravan and made it more noticeable, but it was necessary as long as I could not rely on the teachers alone knowing how to point out and make comprehensible everything possible.

Meantime another teacher substituted for me at the institution so that I was not uneasy. Several times the children were accompanied to the homes of families who were friends, and these visits gave them an opportunity to know many people and new objects, to find their way in various surroundings, making many comparisons with their own. I will not speak of the moral advantage of feeling

the necessity for being pleasant, quiet and well behaved, ready to find their way in new places, to treasure many talks and new experiences. And then they had to get in and out of the tram without causing pitying exclamations of the public, walk swiftly through the streets without jostling or being jostled, ^{and} to cross quickly between carriages. These walks were real initiations into life. They were conducted only for children of the third class and above, but from time to time there were general excursions.

The general excursions were for all the pupils and several times the young inmates of the unit also took part. Especially at the end of the school year or at the time of vintage we made an excursion into the country. It was the only summer diversion, because the authorities did not permit the pupils to go and pass the vacation at home.

This question of vacations at home is very serious and difficult to decide. The majority of the blind come from poor families, who have no way of maintaining them and assisting them suitably. And this is the least of it, for some families are immoral and how can we say to them, "We allow others to take their children, but not you?" There would be danger of hatred and endless quarrels. So to avoid trouble, some institutions refuse permission to all the pupils. But this measure leads to other difficulties. The children become strangers to their parents and brothers, and when at the end of the course of studies they are dismissed ^{from} the institution, the home, obliged to receive them, is no longer endurable to them. This increases the causes of mutual recrimination and of what teachers call the ingratitude of the beneficiaries. Besides the monotony of

the community life makes the children exigent and unwilling. Not infrequently, with one thing and another, they lose the sense of real life, with its sorrows and hard necessities.

The practise of sending pupils to their homes is constantly gaining, notwithstanding its disadvantages, and I am in favor of it. I could get permission to go home only for pupils who paid monthly board and could therefore be considered in a different category from the inmates. It seemed to me that there could have been a much more liberal solution. Indigent or estranged families think of their own accord of inventing pretexts for not receiving their children. In the case of families of bad or doubtful morals, when they insist, as they rarely do, on having their children, the director does not lack in his turn a way of finding pretexts for canceling or abbreviating the leave, or else ~~for~~^{of} facing the situation with tact and seeing to settling it to the least disadvantage, in agreement with ^{the} families themselves. But this exceeded my powers, as it was the province of the Superior.

What I could do was to organize some fine excursions, provided they were not at the expense of the hospice. Thanks to the director of the Tramway of the Castelli Romani, who granted me the trip free, and thanks also to the facilities granted by the directors of the tramways of Rome, the greatest part of the expense was paid. For the rest, all went well with the help of good friends. One lady, however, must be named, Donna Angela Torlonia Benfanati, to whom the best excursions were due.

One day when we were speaking of the sea, I had promised the girls to take them there, thinking that Providence would enable me to find the means in some way. But the school year was coming to its ^{close} ~~end~~ and I began to grow apprehensive about keeping my promise, when one

day Donna Angela came to visit the school and asked what gift she could make to the children. Her contribution was enough to pay for the excursion to Anzio for all the women inmates large and small and also for another excursion to Velletri, to eat grapes from the experimental vines.

THREE MEMORABLE EXCURSIONS

The excursion to Anzio was a holiday never to be forgotten by the girls, the inmates and the sisters or by me, so unmixed was the joy that I was able to procure for them all, including the old Superior. A carriage reserved in the train, a modest banquet *in at* which inmates, sisters and teachers fraternized as people can when served together at the same table, after they had got an appetite for it with a trip to Nettuno, the sisters and the old women in carriages, the girls on foot along the sea, on the rocks, behind the ruins of the fortress of Sangallo, where the spray of the waves reached and their rumbling was heard below our feet, because the sea was very rough. A boat trip had also been planned, but as the sea did not permit it, the Captain of the port offered in compensation something even more attractive, a visit to a torpedo boat. The officers and sailors with chivalrous kindness and skill conducted the visitors in groups to every part of the ship, letting them touch and explaining the apparatus. They even put in motion the mechanism of a torpedo to let us hear the movement of the clockwork and give a better idea of the discharge. The torpedo boat was returning from Tripoli, hence the story of its exploits. A visit was also planned to the ruins of Nero's ~~villa~~ villa, but the July day was not long enough and the train would not have waited for our return. Also that train, which never arrives, seemed to go too fast for our excursionists, who, although they

had not drunk excessively, were intoxicated by the air and by happiness. It was frequently necessary to require a little silence, lest the chattering and cries of admiration for every trifle, rising above the noise of the train, should scandalize the travelers in neighboring carriages.

Another memorable excursion the following summer was to Castel Gandolfo. Only the pupils, invited by Don Carlo and Donna Angela Torlonia to their villa, took part in this. The villa and the reception were alike princely. Nothing was lacking that could make the day varied and entertaining.~~and so on~~ Unfortunately I did not have the power of Joshua to stop the sun, nor had our hosts provided for so many people to spend the night, yet we were nearly forced to do so, because a group of girls who went some distance with a teacher almost missed the train.

All the things that could be touched that day were lightly brushed, dusted by some hand. This is the most advisable teaching material, frequent excursions, with all the attraction that things have when learned in their natural place. Even the good friends who cannot give money will have no difficulty in opening their houses for a few hours to these beings who with their grateful joy bring the choicest blessings.

Of one other excursion there remains with me a special and moving remembrance. The Directress of the Casa Mafaldina in Frascati for the orphans of the earthquake, Lina Operti, had formed friendships between her pupils and ours by letter writing. Those girls in their free time transcribed into Braille stories and poems for their little friends, for which they received in return warm affection. They had need of this, deprived as they were of almost all their relatives.

In the autumn vacation of 1915, on an excursion to Rome, they came to the hospice to know their friends in person and to have a light afternoon luncheon with them. It was arranged that the visit should be returned, but for an entire day, at Frascati the following spring. The Casa Mafalda was in a villa surrounded by a farm and we went there during the Easter vacation. For three days it had been necessary to put off the excursion on account of bad weather, and impatience had grown to the point of making me promise to ^{take} ~~take~~ them the next day even if it poured. The telephone wakened me before four o'clock, and the sister announced that the sky was cloudy but the girls were already up. She had not been able to make them keep quiet, so in desperation had finally allowed them to rise. "Courage, then," said I, "we will go some way or other even though it should be raining as we leave the house." But Jove yielded to innocent sighs, and while the tram climbed toward Frascati, the clearest April day came into being.

All the "Mafaldinas" were waiting with equal anxiety, and when the ranks were broken one group was made at once of the two companies. What those little girls were able to teach their guests about the house, the garden and the farm is indescribable. And since in that institution the pupils had to do all the housework themselves, including the cooking, they did not wish to be separated a moment from their friends, who in their turn wished to help in some way. The result was that dinner was delayed half an hour and the roast was almost burned. A great chocolate egg, the largest that could be found, was the surprise of the table and served as a sweetmeat.

The sisters, overwhelmed with courtesies, and put to sit in the shade, rested from their duties. What could they watch? And after

The first of these is the fact that the
 world is not a uniform whole, but a
 collection of many different parts, each
 with its own characteristics and laws.
 This is the principle of diversity, which
 is the basis of all life and activity.
 The second is the fact that the world
 is not a static whole, but a dynamic
 one, constantly changing and evolving.
 This is the principle of change, which
 is the basis of all progress and development.
 The third is the fact that the world
 is not a chaotic whole, but an ordered
 one, governed by certain laws and principles.
 This is the principle of order, which
 is the basis of all civilization and society.
 The fourth is the fact that the world
 is not a selfish whole, but a cooperative
 one, where all parts are interdependent
 and work together for the common good.
 This is the principle of cooperation, which
 is the basis of all harmony and peace.
 The fifth is the fact that the world
 is not a material whole, but a spiritual
 one, where the mind and soul are the
 true sources of power and wisdom.
 This is the principle of spirituality, which
 is the basis of all enlightenment and liberation.
 These five principles are the foundation
 of all knowledge and understanding, and
 they are the keys to unlocking the
 mysteries of the universe and the human
 condition.

all, what need of it was there? That day each of our pupils could be said to have two eyes all to herself. Indeed, more than one was contended for by four or six. And not one of those little girls could have had an instant of entertainment or freedom, taken up as they were in the office they desired, that of hostesses and sisters.

This excursion lingers fondly in my memory, all the more because it was the last. I left the hospice two months later. The orphans of the Casa Mafalda, who have since become teachers, wives, mothers, also remember their little friends with tenderness and speak of that day as one of the most joyous of their lives.

Our pupils had become so gay, lively and attractive that they no longer aroused compassion but sympathy and tenderness. The wife of the English Ambassador, Lady Rodd, came one day in the end of May 1916 to visit the school. She invited the girls to spend an afternoon with her daughters in her villa on the Via Nomentana. It was understood that I should take them soon after the examinations, but the examinations were postponed until my return, which did not take place.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Another argument against the ^{false} sentimentality which keeps blind children away from other children will be found in the very beautiful custom of which I am about to tell. The Baroness Ferrero Roux was very fond of my school. The young ladies of her family, especially the eldest one, were for some time among my most assiduous helpers. In due gratitude and affection I will mention that Baron Ferrero, from the time that he was editor in chief of the Tribuna, was always my best counsellor and supporter. The Baroness thought that it would be a very instructive thing for her children and very pleasant for ours

if instead of having a Christmas tree at their own house they had it at the Margherita Hospice. The numerous family friends of the house of Ferrero were then invited to be present with their children. Each one brought gifts, others received them, so that everyone took part, the little guests and the inmates, each one according to his taste.

Giovanni Cena, Alessandro Marcucci, Augusto Sindici, Carena the painter, a group of music students, among them Miss Olivieri, now Mrs. Respighi, and various others worked hard with good results, some decorating the tree and the hall, others playing or singing or reciting verses, others collecting presents.

Someone will ask what interest a Christmas tree could have for blind children and if a party of rich and poor children together must not inevitably turn into something conventional and hybrid. But the fact remains that the Christmas tree was repeated at the Margherita Hospice for three years and would have been repeated still if the school had continued, winning new friends every year, although after our entrance into the war, gifts were deliberately limited. "Let us have the tree without gifts, to spend two hours joyfully," said the inmates. The women, old and young, were proud to show the woolen stockings and scarfs which they were making for the soldiers. "Let us have the Christmas tree for the little blind girls," said the Baroness Ferrero to her friends and children, "you will be satisfied with a small present, so that these little girls may take part too, and because we must think specially of the soldiers who are fighting for us."

The tree was an event which brought something homelike and broke the monotony of life at the hospice. It was held between New Year's

and Epiphany, the popular holiday for gifts in Rome, so we killed two birds with one stone. Some days before, the Superior inquired, half joking, half serious, the gift desired by each one. We tried to give the preference to useful things, but then there were surprises, jokes, such as giving a packet of cigars to a woman or a vestee to an old man. The largest hall, which was used for the school, some days before was cleared and locked. There the tree was taken with the ornaments and gifts, gradually as they came. And only the indiscretion of the most cunning with the connivance of some sister, succeeded in discovering what there was, how large the tree was, and how the hall had been prepared.

I have already said that the majority of the blind conserve a remnant of sight. The tree, which was lighted unexpectedly after the window shutters had been closed, gave an effect which was shared even by those who saw nothing, thanks to the exclamations and descriptions of the others. The gradation of the remnants of sight makes a kind of ladder between the sighted and the blind, so that the latter do not feel their deprivation in all its crudity. Rather than feeling regret or envy, they ^{attach} ~~attach~~ an importance, which would seem excessive, to the visual impressions which they still receive or which they hear described, like a crowd which gathers to see something which only those nearest can see and frequently keeps on pressing and is content to see a banner and to hear the exclamations and explanations of the more fortunate.

So powerful is the fascination of things not seen but imagined through the admiration of others, that verse writers born blind - and they are many - it seems can sing of nothing but starry skies, butterflies' wings, shining crowns, impassioned in describing

with the tenacity of a foreigner who needs to speak the language of the people among whom he lives.

The "Vatra Luminoasa" of Carmen Sylva could find inhabitants, not citizens. While a blind man knows that the majority of men who exist perceive and know something unknown to him, he feels himself abnormal in life and prefers to get the benefits of light by the words and help of others rather than to be segregated in his kingdom of darkness among wretched companions of misfortune. If a blind man experiences this desire, it is a sign that neglect and disillusion have made him so misanthropic and abnormal.

On this subject an observation seems to me useful. Some people either from a love of linguistic propriety or from an excessive delicacy of mind, which should be better directed, when talking with a blind man take great pains not to use words appertaining to the language of sight. So they express themselves with circumlocutions and unusual forms, frequently affected and strange. Linguistic propriety has less value than spontaneity, and as to delicacy, we praise the intention but the effect is to remind us of our abnormality, if we ever had a moment to forget it. Nothing is dearer in conversation and in all relationships with the sighted than to feel ourselves treated with simplicity and to have our singularity taken notice of as little as possible.

^{any rate}
~~At to the rest,~~ we tried to adapt our Christmas tree to the spectators with a profusion of fragrant flowers and the gifts arranged so that they could be touched. A carillon played hidden in the depths of the tree, high up ^{was} a cage of canaries, which the shining of the lights and the voices of the people suddenly excited to twitter. A gramophone was the gift of the President to the community ^{at} the first ~~year~~ Christmas tree. It was played repeatedly and friends gave

also the necessity of a change in the law of the land in order to be able to do so.

The first condition of any such change is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The second condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The third condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The fourth condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The fifth condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The sixth condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The seventh condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The eighth condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The ninth condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so. The tenth condition is that the law should be such as to be able to do so.

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records. After the surprises there was music and verses were recited, preferably verses in Roman dialect, and finally a few friendly words for all were said by one or another of those present, words which find their way to the hearts of poor people and gain their respectful confidence when they come from persons elevated in mind no less than in social position.

NUTRITION AND GOOD TABLE MANNERS

Besides these parties I was anxious to seek every opportunity the whole year long to vary the life within the community. There were religious ceremonies with sermons and singing, visits of children from other schools, lunches out of doors in some pleasant place on the farm at the time of cherries, strawberries, watermelons and grapes. The Saint's day of the Superior, my own, that of the teachers', each had to have a little party, and the imagination of the girls was engaged in finding the most suitable diversions. And since there is no party without an extra dish on the table, this did not indeed excite gluttony, but made up for the insufficiency of the daily diet. This, if it was enough for sedentary and idle people to live on, proved increasingly insufficient for the needs of growing girls continually exercising, and the older ones now applying themselves seriously to study.

But the means of the Administration and the question of not treating the inmates in different ways were outside of my authority and even caused some murmuring against my claims. Hence another reason for recurring to extra food, justifying it with every solemnity imaginable, so that every increase had a double utility, physical and moral. Of course the Administration bore none of the expense.

In institutions for the blind too frugal a diet is given, if ordinary charitable institutions are taken as a norm, for obvious reasons of economy and not to make the pupils exacting, since almost all come from poor families where unfortunately they will have to return. These reasons are doubtless strong, but they are at variance with the laws of physiology. If the children are to study like the sons of the rich, if they are to make up for the retarded development of their early years, their diet cannot be that of inmates and keep them in health. Let the administrations take fewer of them but feed them suitably. Above all it must be considered that exercises of sensorial and psychic compensation require great effort of voluntary and thoughtful attention, demanding an exceptional activity of upper nerve centres, whose nourishment, as is known, is more costly.

Nourishment not in proportion to waste is undoubtedly one of the chief causes of the fact, already mentioned several times, that many pupils promising in their early years gradually fail to live up to their promise. In a speech at the awarding of prizes at the S. Alessio Institution for the Blind in Rome, in 1913 or 1914, Dr. Creste Parisotti uttered sharp words in condemnation of the new educational methods for the blind, fit only to make maladjusted neuresthenics, with exceptions which ought not be given as a rule. I quote from memory, as it does not appear that this speech was printed.

It is true indeed that even the blind who have succeeded in making an honored position for themselves in the world are not rarely those who pay with nervous disorders or too early exhaustion for the victories won over misfortune. In the time of general neuresthenia in which we are living the blind could not be an exception. Statistics could easily show, on the other hand, that the present institutions for the blind give a remarkable number of tuberculosis

cases, just because of little exercise and insufficient nourishment. Almost all of us blind who are successful today can assert that we have had to combat a terrible ally of blindness, insufficiency of means and food, and have been forced therefore to an effort which would have been serious even for sighted youths.

In my ^{boarding} ~~secondary~~ school, only one bounty saved us - as much bread as we wanted. Several times, for reasons of economy, the council discussed limiting the ration, but they never had the heart to do it. At bottom they loved us like sons. They were the founders, may they be blessed! The food was good and abundant compared to ~~any~~ other civic charitable institutions, but I well remember the almost daily languor which my healthy organism remedied with invincible drowsiness. I partly provided for making up the difference by frequent visits home. In summer vacations in the country at my uncles' I made provision for winter like ~~the~~ thrushes in the time of grapes.

I therefore insisted upon proper food for the pupils as a need of the school. Since the afternoon luncheon was supervised by the teachers and allowed only to the pupils, it was possible without being unfair to the community to provide this supplementary meal before supper. During the afternoon luncheon, moreover, it was possible to attend to a very important matter, which was impossible during the meals of the community, because there were not enough sisters, that is, that the children should learn to eat properly and to handle knives, forks and spoons dextrously. (1)

(1) For practical advice on good table manners, see Among the Blind, Chapter VII, by Emil Javal. Paris, 1903. I quote a chapter on using knives and forks and light glasses, because they show the amount of their contents better, so that ^{it is easier} ~~is easier~~ to avoid filling them too much or too little.

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In my school for lack of personnel and to simplify the service forks and spoons but no knives were given us and the food was brought from the kitchen cut up. The same thing was done at the Margherita Hospice. As for me, since my family also was afraid to let me take a knife in my hand, I began to use one only when I was about eighteen, when I obtained as a special favor from the director of the institution the addition of a knife. Yet in the workshop we used much more dangerous tools, scissors, knives, shoemaker's knives to cut the cardboard for binding books, also saws and scalpels for work "outside of instruction."

RELATIONS WITH THE FAMILIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHOICE OF PROFESSION OR TRADE

The question of food for students, which cannot be the same as that for inmates, together with the question indicated before in regard to sending or not sending the pupils to their families during vacations, obliges me now to enter in good earnest on a subject more discussed and indeed more absorbing, the relation of blind pupils with their families.

With some exceptions, the families of the blind do not represent a help but a burden. It is necessary, however, to take account of a burden to counteract it, of still better, if possible, to get advantage from it by turning it into a ^{motive} ~~motor~~ force. I am still under the sorrowful impression of a heartrending letter received some days ago from a young blind man, a fine teacher of music. After having won with honor a diploma in a famous high school, he now finds himself confined with his family who work a tenant farm. His family is fond

of him, so are the parish priest and the mayor. But he can do nothing but play the organ in church the first Sunday of every month, because the funds of the parish are not sufficient to pay for this luxury on all church holidays. He can too, if he wishes, collect a crowd with a portable organ to the playing of which the peasants dance on Sunday afternoons in the courtyard of the inn.

This fine young man indeed is threatened with becoming neurasthenic in idleness and for want even of anyone who can read him a page of music. As for sending him music and books to read, in the first place, there are very few of them and they are very high priced, and then what is the use? This is, however, the condition of the majority of our young blind musicians licensed by the institutions. After a few years of this imprisonment, discouraged, embittered, they find at last some small position to play in a cinema theatre, or succeed in getting the meagre patronage of neighboring churches where they play the organ, earning less than a sacrestan and becoming cross-grained and burdensome to their relatives, when they are not positively forced to overcome their shame and go to play in the cafés.

The condition of the blind who have learned a trade is not different. To make mats, brooms, flower baskets, straw seats for chairs, are said to be occupations well adapted to country families, but in reality many country families do this work for themselves, and then there is the difficulty of getting raw material. This can be obtained by some through patronage, paying for it by selling the work. But it would be necessary to have a little capital to keep a person who would go to the station to pay the charges and to fairs to sell the goods. They end by working at long intervals, even losing interest, and implore a place in some asylum, when they do not prefer to go begging for alms more or less openly.

Finally, following the example of some blind men who have succeeded in doing well as professors of letters or languages, a number have set out for the universities. For them too it is a question of life ^{or} ~~of~~ death to find a way of remaining in the city and leaving their families, who live in the country or in small centres. But this means almost always to deprive themselves of the least expensive help and assistance. The director of an institution for the blind must take notice that he is assuming the burden of sons. Until the day when they earn enough to live and support someone, he must give them the necessary assistance. As for daughters, the problem is still graver.

The girls return to families that are rough, not clean, needy. Less free to walk alone on the streets, without the prospect of having a family, they seek a corner in some convent or workshop and live resigned, when religion comforts them, otherwise consumed by desperation. For blind girls even more than for boys, the families must not be relied on, outside of exceptional cases, except as an incentive to be brave and good, to be able some day to support them.

Let us begin then by clearing the ground of unfounded illusions. The director must be the real father of his pupils ^{and} feeling ~~the~~ the entire responsibility for their present and future. I do not mean that he ought to try to make his pupils forget their natural affections and duties. This is another even more serious mistake, because love of the family and comparison with their brothers are the most valid incentive to spur the children. No

substitution can be made for natural affections. To attempt to do so is another pernicious illusion.

Also when it is a question of the specialization of pupils, it is necessary to take account as much as possible of the conditions of the environment from which they come and of their inevitable future relations with their own families. Send the children to their homes now and then, because only in the family do they take exact account of their own condition. Endure patiently the apparent ~~re~~^{retro}gression that these visits produce. Ward off bad habits, redoubbling vigilance that they may not spread, also have the visits of moderate frequency and length, with wise circumspection in each case.

The director of an institution must exercise a certain paternal influence on the families as well. This is not to ask too much, especially if the director is blind like the children entrusted to him and can have the power of example over them, and over their families that of admiration, inward hope and a special confidence.

It seems to me that I have made clear my thought on the standard to be followed in specialization; music, work, literary studies. Specialization should be delayed with a foundation of a good general, formative culture, then determined by taking into account all available elements - personal gifts, home conditions, general conditions of public opinion. After all, in this way cases of wise adaptation are made possible, so frequently also in those who have sight, or cases of supplementary professions, as has happened to many of my musical friends, who have

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come to get their chief earnings from tuning or selling pianos, or those of ^{others,} professors of letters or languages, who have ^{found} it more advantageous to turn to ^{account} ~~profit~~ their ~~ex~~ musical or mechanical or administrative abilities, acquired in leisure time.

Will it not be proper to offer the objection that thus people are made superficial, jacks of all trades? I hope not to be so grossly misunderstood. Purus mathematicus, purus asinus! May we be saved rather from exclusiveness, from the oneness of specialists. And let us bless our Latin ~~nationality~~ versatility, which permits us to improvise excellent officials with people dedicated to letters or law, which is certainly the mark of privilege of our race.

PUPILS MUST BE SURROUNDED BY PERSONAL FRIENDS

The director will not find his office impossible of realization if he knows how to draw friends about him. This is another subject which should be made clear.

Hitherto institutions for the blind have existed on charity, some without endowment, almost from day to day. The chief care of those directing them had to be to get contributions and attract legacies. The pupils and teachers also had to give their services, devoting most of their time to preparing public exhibitions, recitals and performances. Often the most devoted benefactors did not know the individual pupils except the few destined to make the institution prominent, flowers that usually withered before bearing fruit. Their character was spoiled and they gave up studying seriously.

The poor institutions should be pitied. It may be said, it is better to do nothing than to do badly. But if meanwhile there exists a group of blind capable of demonstrating by example and propaganda

the need for removing our education from the field of charity to that of social utility, the credit lies with these poor institutions. At last the aid promised many times by the government is about to become a fact. At any rate it is time that the larger institutions especially postpone their concern about increasing their property for that of perfecting results, which are their reason for being.

The Straccan Rodinò Institution for the Blind in Naples has a statutory regulation that every inmate must have her own patroness chosen from the charitable and wealthy ladies who are interested in this work, so that the patroness enters into relations with the family of her protégée, sees what can be done with it and seeks the most suitable placing of the girl when her studies are finished. I thought of something similar for my pupils, being thoroughly convinced that general committees almost never do enough for anyone. If the persons who compose them would divide the work of looking^{each one} after this or that need, each being urged to select according to her inclination, knowing at close range the nature and progress of the pupil and her intimate home conditions, she will be able at the right moment to turn all her influence to account. But when this is divided on behalf of many, it loses efficiency because of the number.

With necessary moderation and caution I therefore tried to gain for each pupil of mine the special kindness of that woman among the persons or families who were friends of the institution, who seemed to me most adapted or inclined toward her; as a father of many sons ~~will~~ tries to give each of them a protector who will cooperate for his good with the godfathers and godmothers of baptism and confirmation. I know that several orphanages have in this way

secured the good fortune of a number of their pupils. In my institution also I had succeeded in forming for various pupils personal relations of affectionate interest, which ceased, when the school ended, for want of ~~an~~ nurture.

Then when it is possible to form friendships for pupils with children of good families, the results have been valuable. I did not have the power to grant the requests of excellent ladies that one pupil or another might be taken for recreation or to spend a holiday afternoon with her daughters. Someone who needed the sea or the mountains would have been able to enjoy them gratuitously and with every moral guarantee. The friendships made by children often become stronger than kinship.

It is fitting to offer here another objection. Such a system, it is said, gives occasion for preferences, comparisons, envy, most pernicious in a community. The least attractive children, who are frequently the most deserving, are neglected and grow discouraged, while the more fortunate become pretentious. It is the teachers ^{who are} avoiding trouble, or those little prepared for their office, who lament these disadvantages. The less attractive children should have their lacks compensated for by the preference of the director and his most intimate friends. To use their special attention is made easier by not having to think of all those of whom everyone else thinks.

Anyone who has been at boarding-school knows that there is felt an atmosphere almost of a family on holidays or in vacations, when few remain, only those who for some reason, almost always a sad one, have not been able to leave. It is enough for those in charge to relax the rules a little and be kinder to form in a few days

consequently the same thing will be done in this paper. I have
 considered what I have written in regard to the various
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relations of trust and affection among companions and between superiors and inferiors which would not be thought possible while the community is going on in its usual efficient way.

If a director and his trusted collaborators do not succeed in freeing themselves entirely from favoritism, a thing in fact more difficult than we wish to have others or our own conscience believe, then the children, who are extremely sensitive on this subject, will be envious and discouraged, and the fortunate ones will hold their heads high. But a keen and watchful teacher knows how at times to encourage, at times to repress, taking advantage of the very weaknesses of his pupils and their friends, that every emotion may be well directed. Only the uniformity of the regulation made for ~~the~~ living quietly, of the rule that is immutable for fear of creating precedents, mortifies the energies and if they are too tenacious, corrupts them.

All these considerations would seem obvious, but I am ~~counselled~~ to insist on them by the sad experience that all affirm but few practice them. If any institution not really directed by these standards gives more or less occasion for difficulties, an institution for the blind risks making the majority of its pupils more unhappy than if they had been left unconscious of their double blindness, physical and spiritual.

FORM CHARACTER FIRST OF ALL. "REMEDIES," NOT PUNISHMENTS

The uniform course of the community prevents finding in each pupil's own resources the most direct and active cooperation first in their education, and then in their placement. I have already had occasion to speak of the remnant of sight, which, suitably utilized, ~~succeeds~~³ not only as a valuable auxiliary to the one who

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possesses it, but also to his companions. So a progressive teacher, in the best sense of the word, merely to be just, should never treat two pupils in the same way, because there are no two pupils exactly alike.

I could now count on regular collaboration, and the pupils continued to increase in number and age. Therefore the education of character, based on the qualities of each one, required the greatest care. More than the intrinsic worth of competence and ability, certain qualities of knowing how to take men and circumstances in the right way, which may be called moral qualities, help in making a career. Astuteness, hypocrisy, and what in a word may be called self-seeking, are not in the long run that precious coin which many think. At any rate, they are coin almost useless to the blind, since the greater difficulty of competition and the lesser liberty of movement result in their being little able to command respect by themselves, even when they have indisputable professional worth. So after they have obtained employment they are more exposed to the criticisms and disparagement of interested persons, I will not say of these who are ill-disposed, since someone will deny that there can be anyone ill-disposed to us. In fact, the efficiency of a blind man is always dependent on the possibility of his finding his complement, at times more or less significant but never wholly ~~meeting~~ ^{unnecessary}, in the help of the eyes of others, getting advantage from the principle of the division of work.

Now this integration, this complement of the eyes of others, must be bought. To have money at disposal is the fortune of a very few. Much of it is needed to be served a little. The venal eye is distracted lazy, when it is not positively unfaithful. On the other hand there are often found persons who from a sense of pity of kindness

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will do us a favor. But still oftener, permit me to say it frankly, the urgency of their own affairs or a false fear of being saddened by being with a blind person, makes people tend in his presence, taking advantage of his not being able to see, to dispense even with the contingent duty of greeting him. What ^{cruelty} ~~cruelty~~, if one reflects, and how it makes us suffer! Certainly misfortune ~~can~~ only count on rare and unhurried Samaritans, unless the ~~sx~~ sufferer can win for himself interest and esteem with positive gifts of amiability and merit which compensate for the deficiency.

The formation of the character of my pupils ^{was bound} ~~had~~ to be the summit of my purpose. The oldest had already taken ~~the~~ final examinations, and since I have always believed that the only formative culture is the classical, I directed ~~ed~~ them toward the classical course. While waiting for the tramway which would make transportation easy, convinced moreover that I could make them gain a year, given their age and development, I arranged to prepare them myself, with the help of the most ardent of my assistants, who was then attending the faculty of letters at the university.

The sisters and some of the administrators disapproved my resplution, maintaining that the study of Latin was not ~~sx~~ suited to poor girls, and was calculated rather to put notions in their heads and make them proud. I explained to all, however, especially to the pupils, that to go to the ~~classical~~ school does not mean to start to become a great personage, but to gain a quality of culture indispensable for anyone who wishes to get a diploma in music and enable herself to earn something by coaching beginners, above all to gain that minimum of culture with which a blind person can in a sense be on a par with a sighted one who has gone through the elementary school.

Even a blind working girl needs a culture superior to that of the sighted, for so many reasons: to console her spirit and enable her to taste the masterpieces of poetry and prose, the only delights for her where others go to enjoy themselves at a dance or a cinema; to develop together with personality all the resources of speech, imagination, character, and thus compensate in a practical way for her slighter prestige and attractions. Finally, we cannot know how "art teaches." The study of Latin did not excuse them at all from keeping up in music and work.

These were the chief reasons, but the most important was what I told them, to form character, to put to the test their resistance, their attitude, their earnestness. The very contrast which they had indeed observed between my views and the sisters', the very ~~principles~~ ^{sentiments} and sarcasms of the other inmates, were useful educational elements which I valued. I valued them to such a degree that when the year after the examinations for admission to the third class had been passed and the greatly desired tramway had come so that they could be sent to attend the public school, I did not send the most promising girls, who had received the best marks, as I did not think her of strong enough character. I put her to the difficult test of studying in the hospice by herself, with only the notes and the help which her charm succeeded in getting from her companions. If she had the perseverance to study in the hospice, she would take the examinations for admission to the fourth class. The entreaties of her family and of the sisters, to whom the measure seemed too severe, were ~~unavailing~~ ^{unavailing}. The responsibility was mine, and I had decided to let her cut short her studies, rather than to have her continue them to become a wiseacre. The lesson was useful, and the girl became more serious and loveable.

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Another girl was intelligent but indifferent, or rather, weak. Her stock answer to every urging was, "why, yes, exactly!" She belonged to a good family, her brothers attended the university, her father and grandfather were professors. I knew very well that she had pride in herself and that this conduct resulted only from having been left in idleness and indulgence at home, then forced to become indifferent from doing one class every two years in one of those institutions for the blind which have a rule that the best pupils must repeat each elementary class for at least two years. She had then come to my school, attending the fourth class the first year. One fine day then I said to her, "Do you know the lot that awaits you if you do not study? If you had eyes, you could at the worst go out to service, but you cannot do this in your condition, so your destiny will be to spend your whole life in an asylum. And that you may have an idea of living continually in idleness, which you like so much, I will make you experience it and send you for a week to live in the unit of old women."

The threat had no effect and could have none, because she lacked the experience. So I gave orders that she should be taken among the old women and remain there an entire week without a book, without ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ a needle or a knitting-needle, and no chance to do anything but listen to the complaints and interminable rosaries punctuated by yawns of those poor women. "Prayers, tears, lamentations" did not avail to abbreviate the trial by one hour. It succeeded. The girl to-day is attending the university and has had no more need of stimulus, although she has had to study under no small difficulties.

I punished seldom, but I never revoked a punishment given, so thereafter the mere threat was sufficient. Besides I took care not

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to call punishments by that name. I called them "remedies," never forgetting that maxim of D'Azeglio, "The best way to make children good is to show them obstinately that you believe them to be so."

One girl of very exuberant temperament, who had entered the institution at the age of eleven, after she had been accustomed to play in the meadows of her neighborhood with the sheep and goats, often had such violent tantrums that two persons could not hold her. The more they reproved her, the worse she became, so that the sisters and her companions were in despair. The tantrums occurred almost always in my absence and that of the teachers, because the exercise that we made her take, especially when she began to get restless, prevented the explosions. It was necessary, however, to cure her radically, and one day in presence of the girl, who expected a greater reproof for a worse tantrum than usual, I declared with great solemnity that I had discovered the cause and the remedy; she ought not to be scolded, but cured; a milk diet every day that these rages seized her. No masticating for that stomach of an ostrich! I was recommended to give her some other punishment, but I replied that this was a cure, not a punishment. The fact remains that she finally put herself voluntarily on a milk diet when she began to feel restless, a short preventive diet.

I often told my pupils how and why I had studied, although my parents and teachers were apposed, for fear that I should try an impossible undertaking and meet bitter disillusionment, with only the help of an old man whom I paid ten centesimi an hour. He read me French as it is written, Latin as ~~the~~ sacristans read it, without understanding a word. He traced on my hand with his fingers mathematical signs and the outlines of maps. I taught him to read Greek, naturally without confusing him by telling him the names

of the letters, by means of an alphabet in relief on which he showed me the signs he did not understand. When they advised me to put aside my studies, telling me that I could become maladjusted, since even if I succeeded in taking a doctor's degree, I should find no one who wanted to make use of me, I replied that culture is a good in itself, even if it had to be the only condiment of scanty bread earned by the humblest trade. And I added smiling, "St. Francis asked alms in French, when things were worst, I will go asking them in Latin and perhaps I shall get more." So I told preferably stories of men, especially blind men, who had succeeded in winning an honored position amid many difficulties without becoming proud.

I did not fail to add, moreover, that for my part, it never entered my head that the work of a lawyer or a professor gave greater dignity than that of a basket maker or of any workman whatever diligent in his trade; and that I was intensely interested in these studies because, while my hands became callous making mats and hampers, I listened to philosophy and history which some assistant or friend kindly read to me. Even after I had taken up these studies professionally, some manual work or humble service which chance presented, was often the most delightful amusement for me. And it should be noted that often my culture and the development of my talent gained from books made possible for me practical applications and expedients which I actually had the pleasure of being able to teach to blind or sighted workmen.

In this matter - why not say so? - it is a strange thing that we, first among the blind to face the new life of higher studies, with incredibly meagre means, have in general succeeded

better than young men who have studied with greater help of books, encouragement, readers and tutors.

The reason for this may be found in the following story: - the institution of Lecco~~e~~, as a result of our experience, sent its best pupils to ^{the} public classical school. Now when any one of them was scolded or discontented about anything, conscious of the high honor which came to the institution through him, he would threaten not to go to school any longer. Once they actually went on strike, until it became necessary to resort to severer punishments to correct their misbehavior.

Another reason is the same one for which the first women who studied with men students were in competition with the men, and won almost the tradition of first place for the girls. When the tradition was established, the mediocre girls took advantage of it and they quickly fell behind. The professors, through a natural feeling of chivalry and also in the wise hope that encouragement would help more than severity, began insensibly to be indulgent and through distributive justice the young men benefited also from this indulgence, hence the presence of women became a coefficient of decline for the school.

We, the first blind, were accepted in the schools not without difficulty. We had to win confidence by surpassing our average sighted companions. But after our example, if a blind student was weak in this or that subject, a sense of consideration of his special difficulties led to compromising. All pity and indulgence are injurious to the future, because the blind man cannot ask them in competition with the sighted, and once he is accustomed to having them, he will end by no longer thinking of deserving them, and will

dare to claim them, accusing the prejudices of others against blindness, even if he ~~would~~ thought to accuse himself.

For two reasons therefore I was severe with my dear pupils - because they were blind and because they were girls, since in school mind and character should be tempered and made strong. When the following year when they went to the public classical school, every time they brought a good report, they received from me the chilling comment, "Make allowance for pity." But I must remark that such harshness would have embittered them if it had not come from a companion of their own condition, and if it had not been modified on my own lips by a friendly inflection, especially when I myself knew their real merit.

When I went to the upper classical school, I had already studied French privately and did very well in this subject. In all my exercises the professor gave me ten. I suspected that pity entered into this, and I once put in a mistake on purpose. The mark was nine. From then on ten had its real value for me and a more affectionate gratitude bound me to the teacher.

Day by day we had to copy in Braille the part of the Latin or Greek texts to be studied at the dictation of some ~~xxx~~ semi-literate and economical reader like my old man. My pupils complained because they had only one copy of the texts for three or four, which they studied in turn or which someone read aloud. Often with this excuse one or another did not bring me her lesson finished. After I had counseled and admonished them several times, I said, "Girls, if you have not the ability and strength to overcome these little difficulties, studies will do you more harm than good. And since you wish a text for each one, try what it means to copy it, as I have had to do with all the necessary texts, including this one for which you are quarreling now." It was the Latin

fables of Gandino. I left them for three days among the wolves, foxes, crows and lambs of AEsop's menagerie, without lessons or recreation, until each one had finished her own copy.

Frequent distractions and amusements, but intensive work, on pain of losing these, and I must say another thing which did them much honor: the severest punishment was to deprive them for some time of our confidence. Once the pupils of the fourth class rebelled against doing a certain exercise. Then I decided that for a whole day neither I nor the teachers would pay any attention to them, leaving them to do what they wished. The sister, moved to pity, came to tell me of their sighs and tears. The children did not wish to leave the school, and that day they formed resolutions which they kept for some time.

It is not true that children like a person who is indulgent; they like one who is just and they admire strength. One who wishes to educate them must be generous and inflexible. "Yea, yea, nay, nay," according to the maxim of the gospel. What unnerves and corrupts is monotony, as I do not tire of repeating. This is the greatest evil of institutions for the blind, in which unfortunately as Giobbe said, "Sunset vainly follows dawn," if the light of knowledge, the warmth of haste, variety of sensations and actions do not characterize each day, with some special quality of its own, individualizing it in the slow and even flow of time.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It is a fact worthy of notice that the majority of our institutions for the blind are kept by religious orders, and the religious feeling of the blind is in general one of the least effective incentives of their education. Frequently they leave the institutions sceptics or

unbelievers. Some knowledge of positivism or Protestantism, entered as contraband or quoted to confute it by catechists, becomes a specious sign of liberty and emancipation in their minds, on which the services, except the music, have little or no effect. Even this has much less influence than is believed, since the first habit of anyone who studies a little music is to become exacting and critical before his time. And the music of the Church, notwithstanding the motu proprio of Pius X., is very rarely superior to the criticism. Then others who wish to conserve traditional religious sentiment in reaction against their companions and for want of a modern guiding rule, often throw themselves into practises of piety or a mysticism which certainly may greatly console them in their misfortune, but lulls them and does not make them conquerors.

Since religious education was not officially entrusted to me in an institution of sisters, still for that very reason I had to interest myself in it ^{as the} more with the indirect means at my disposal. There was daily mass as soon as they got up, the rosary every evening, the reading of the lives of medieval saints and frequent prayers during the day. The truth was that my pupils were bored instead of getting religious good from all this. Sometimes I gave an example, coming to prayers with them and attending the services, especially the great holy days. Above all I lost no opportunity of explaining to them those sublime forms and rites, full of the age-long fascination of great traditions. But even this helped little. They were sated with routine devotion and the monotony conspired more than anything else against my efforts.

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It will be objected that this happens not only in institutions for the blind. But here the mistake brings more serious consequences, because the outward life intervenes less to indemnify with its distractions and experiences. To be religious or not is an important question for all. But the majority of ordinary young people can postpone examining it until they have been in love, until they have provided for a career. A blind person cannot. Love, if indeed it comes, a career/ can be advisable for him only after he has attained self-support.

What to others is the gift of youth and nature for him must be conquered by moral power and tried valor which make up for physical imperfection and give sure promise. Also in regard to love, only the solution of the great problem of existence, of sorrow, of the ultimate pain of life can give his spirit ~~the~~ serenity and security, which then are manifested in the expression of the face, voice and manner~~y~~, and can emancipate him from pity, to make way for better personal feelings toward him.

The institutions for the blind, permit me to state, every one are today on the wrong track as regards religious education. In the majority of them this has ~~been~~ a conspicuous character of piety. The other institutions, supported by laymen who wish to react, conserve a semblance of Catholicism only for political reasons -- mass on holidays, a priest who comes now and then to teach a little of the catechism, empty forms without spirit which the children deride and endure, sensing the hypocrisy. The priest is superfluous ~~or~~ intrusive in these institutions, which think they have been reformed when they are merely laicized.

A strong religion, not founded on pious observances, but on faith that is felt, on active charity, in the intimate sense of

the Divine, in whom we live and ~~more~~ ^{being} and have our ~~very~~ ^{being} of God the ineffable Father rather than the inscrutable Lord, is what we need. "Light of the mind full of love," the only light which can dissolve our double darkness and show us also a sufficient reason for suffering and struggling.

This does not mean at all that I wish to criticize piety and public worship, when they come from the fullness of the heart. But even in this respect I think that an institution for the blind ought to keep close to the great tradition of the official liturgy, explained and applied with the hieratic solemnity of the Benedictine churches, rather than to popular ceremonies, extra-liturgical prayers and songs not valid in usage. I will not delay on this subject, because I still have facts to tell, except to say that my occasional explanations of things pertaining to public worship, the preaching and conversation of several priests of fine spirit whom I was sometimes able to bring to the institution, and going with the pupils to solemn services in the principal basilicas began to lessen their indifference, until they expressed admiration several times even for the routine practises.

I must add another piece of advice to this discussion, since it seems to me very practical, and I give it reporting the experience on which it is founded. In the school where I was educated, a priest from Milan came as director, from that Milan where the spirit of Rosmini and Manzoni is felt perhaps more than anywhere else. The director celebrated mass every morning during the recreation hour. We had permission to go but were not required to do so, and the director made this distinction very clear. So in the evening some devotees gathered spontaneously

in chapel to recite the rosary. The community was held only to short prayers morning and evening, prayers too that were well chosen, and to the services required by the Church. The Rector often gave instead fine readings and interesting lessons on the catechism, from which arose questions and discussions, respectful but free.

The effect of this liberalism was remarkable, and I consider myself greatly indebted to it. The feeling of not being forced permitted spontaneity, ^{and} abstaining on a day when one had little desire did not make the observances routine and hypocritical.

It will be said, good habits should be taught to children. But why impose on them more prayers and practises than the Church commands? About a year later, the rector, from scruple or ill-advised orders, required all to come to daily mass, the rosary and other practises, as is the custom in the majority of schools kept by religious. Then began the decline of religious feeling in our institution. And I myself, who from conviction and sentiment resented this yoke less, made it my duty to protest energetically, refusing more than once to go to Church on week days, to show my companions that this was possible, even a duty, for anyone who in conscience did not feel disposed to go, nor could our superiors seriously insist.

Becoming
THE HOUR OF ~~DEATH~~ CONSCIOUS OF BLINDNESS

What I have said about the forming of character and religious feeling might be enough for my narrative, but it is not sufficient for the importance of the subject. One thing I wish

to add, which is the conclusion of all my experience, although this is not the place to give proofs.

"Here men learn to be blind," is the motto of Sir Arthur Pearson's house. Now when a blind child is found in a good family, he can be trained in exercise and intellectual work better than in a community of companions. But for some time at least he will absolutely need to enter into communion of life and spirit with some blind person older than himself in the decisive moment of passing from adolescence to youth.

To learn to be blind means to make a serious and dispassionate survey of all one's own deficiencies~~xx~~, not only that easy one which lays the blame upon the prejudices of the sighted toward us, but that which uncovers our foolish desires, weaknesses,~~xx~~ susceptibilities and excessive pretensions. A child without sight but healthy in other respects, when he ^{hears} himself pitied or called unfortunate is astonished and almost offended. Unfortunate? Why? He feels like the other urchins, full of vivacity and great hopes. Perhaps he is grieved for lack of a toy, but he does not yet desire the light, except as he might desire to be rich, to have wings or the gift of divining the future. The blind do not begin to understand the misfortune of blindness until they can appraise the special consequences in comparison with human beings in general, that is, when they feel themselves less free, less men, less understood, less loved.

Before that, pity, when it is not rejected, is misunderstood, and this must be thought of seriously, because it is the reason that many sightless children become capricious, exigent, insatiable, thinking it a duty to find ways of being unhappy, since others believe them~~nn~~ to be so, and being obliged of necessity to create futile and unjust causes

to the fact that the Commission has not yet received the necessary information to enable it to make a final decision on the matter. The Commission is, however, of the opinion that the information received to date is sufficient to warrant the Commission in making a preliminary decision on the matter. The Commission has, therefore, decided to make a preliminary decision on the matter, and to recommend that the Commission should continue to receive information on the matter, and to make a final decision on the matter as soon as the necessary information has been received. The Commission has, therefore, decided to make a preliminary decision on the matter, and to recommend that the Commission should continue to receive information on the matter, and to make a final decision on the matter as soon as the necessary information has been received.

of unhappiness, since they are ignorant of the real one.

The terrible hour of consciousness is almost always determined by that crisis which teachers in general do not name for fear of its gravity, or face it lightly under the illusion that it can be prevented—the crisis of first love.

A companion of mine, for example, piqued himself on being loved by a young lady, for the simple reason that he was madly in love with her. "Since you cannot make her a serious offer of marriage," I said to him, "if she responded, you would be the first to accuse her of lightness." But he replied, "I can do nothing without her encouragement, her love." He agreed with me that the young lady was not of strong enough character for him to ask her for a long engagement, to put her into conflict with her family and her own worldly habits.

What was to be done then but to give a tongue lashing to this unfortunate friend, with roughness which would be an insult in the mouth of anyone else but is tempered by ineffable sorrow in the mouth of a companion who himself must have passed through similar hours of torture?

Yet this hour is inevitable. Teachers vainly trifle time away with dissimulating or laughing at its seriousness. Only one who faces it with awareness and overcomes it has by this very effort conquered its weapons to triumph also in his career. Otherwise his originality and character become corrupted or atrophied.

I have nothing to say on this subject in regard to my pupils, because the school lasted too short a time. And if I had anything, it would not be possible to write it. I may say that I hastened to strengthen their will, to develop in them religious feeling and sound morals. Above all I worked over their aesthetic education, convinced that in this is found the most potent auxiliary of morals.

AESTHETIC EDUCATION

It is generally believed that the only art accessible in its entirety for those without sight is music, since even poetry, made of images that are chiefly visual and using the words of common speech, which are for the most part formed on images derived from the sense of sight, is supposed not to be understood in its most essential intimacy without sight.

In speaking of the coeducation of the blind and semi-blind I have had occasion to refer to the possibility of advancing much more fundamentally, by ways of analogy, intelligence and aesthetic understanding, developing and giving value to imaginings and representations which for the sighted are secondary or actually unnoticed. Thus in regard to musical education I have called attention to the educational value which the formation of taste by means of good recitals and suitable comments can have on the general development of the imagination and spirit.

It must be agreed, however, that musical expression is too indeterminate, and that also poetry, if it can be enjoyed, cannot have for a blind person the concreteness that it has for others, since he must understand by means of metonymy and other figures many expressions that are proper and immediate in visual language. Now art so understood is a great comfort, perhaps a greater one, if you will. But since we have seen that in the education of the blind the end to keep in sight above all is the formation of a firm and tempered character, there comes the doubt whether music and poetry ought to be delayed as too enervating, as Plato did for the men of his Republic.

As for myself, I confess that I had a period of distinct aversion for music and for most poetry. It was precisely the period of

greatest inward conflict against the unattainable aspirations of youth. This happens besides to many who are not blind when they turn with ardor all their activity toward higher and no less joyful aesthetics, the aesthetics of forming concepts instead of images by means of severe studies of science and philosophy and of harmonizing thought and life in themselves rather than forms and sounds in the light and air. Since the time of Socrates we have learned this admirable ascending acceptance of art.

Aesthetic education then should not be given to the blind as a matter of consolation, as has been done hitherto, although this does not mean at all that its consolation should be regretted. No one could maintain this less than I, who am one of those who believe that play should be the foundation of all education.

From this error in the aim is derived, however, the important consequence that the chief part of the aesthetic education of the sightless consists not in caring for the formation of musical or literary taste, since this is accomplished almost spontaneously, provided it is not hindered and that good material is offered. The chief part of aesthetic education consists in enabling blind children to feel directly the utmost possible of the beauty and harmony of reality. "The fewer the intellectual experiences of the blind and the more incomplete his relations with nature, the more he needs art to interpret nature and nourish his thought." (1)

(1) I take these words from a very sensible little work by a lawyer, Piero Operti, published by Marietti, Turin, entitled Art in the Education of the Blind. Mr. Operti is a member of a sympathetic group of persons who under the name of "Friends of the Blind" have gathered about the blind teachers of Turin, reading to them, going with them for walks and helping them as is proper for good friends.

Under the same title, Art in the Education of the Blind, Giovanni Brossa read two years ago in Turin a lecture rich in good observation. I read the manuscript of it with ~~pleasure~~ keen pleasure. It is now published in the Modern Italian School.

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Marco Rossi, who after having been present at a musical exhibition at the institution for the blind at Bologna, said one day that the music of the blind has in general the fault of excessive rhythm and sharpness. Perhaps this is ^{true,} ~~there,~~ apart from notable exceptions. In the first place, many blind persons are composers, since they are directed to this art without freedom of choice. Then the greater concentration of their spirit and the lesser possibility of reading and distractions contribute to make their inspiration more compact and reflective.

An analogous defect was observed in the celebrated Swiss sculptor Vidal, who had lost his sight at the age of twenty-eight. The works of the period immediately after his blindness were the most beautiful and the most prized. Some esteemed examples in wood are preserved in the museum at Innsbruck. Then he developed mannerisms, copying his own best motives for lack of freshness in his inspiration in inexhaustible contact with nature. A depth which sometimes approaches the abstruse is noted also by critics in the last works of Beethoven, while those written in the first period of his deafness seem to be the most inspired.

Finally among the blind are mentioned numerous versifiers, some of a certain fame. (1) But those who perhaps would have the best

(1) Berthe Galleron was called by Victor Hugo "la grande voyante" and was crowned by the French Academy. For notices and good observations about blind poets see Alessi, The Truly Miserable, popular commentaries on persons blind from birth and from childhood. Barbera, Florence.

aptitude for poetry are prevented from being fertile and fluent in depth and newness of inspiration in which the vehicle of traditional expression is lacking. Three of the Guidi polished Dante's speech, rhyme and the movements of the "sweet new style." If a blind man wishes to be an original poet, ~~he simply wishes to be an original poet~~ or simply a modest writer of prose who describes sincerely his own impressions, as I have had occasion to do in various articles and lectures, he finds an often insurmountable difficulty, almost at every step, in the words and figures of common speech.

"A poet is born," it is said. But I venture to affirm that if today there were the mind of a great poet among the blind, the time would not yet be ripe for him to be understood, as it happens with certain musical compositions, in which new inspiration rejoices to be disciplined in rejuvenated classic forms, but which are called old in a time when inharmonious and unrhythmical audacities are triumphing.

I hope to be pardoned for the digression, which I wished to interpose because many cultivated people show a special curiosity and frequently express strange judgments on the artistic capacities of the blind, which produce harmful practical results in the appraisal of our professional men. Elementary aesthetic education, to which I wish to limit myself, is a much more modest thing, and may be defined as the habit of finding symmetry, harmony of arrangement, typical form and the most expressive symbols in the impressions and images which a blind man can form with the sensorial and imaginative means which he possesses.

Leonardo da Vinci wrote, "He who loses sight misses the beauty of the world with all the forms of things." The man who was able to teach himself to write correctly with the left hand here divined the

truth, because he did not say "loses" but "misses." In fact, touch gives definite and precise images fitted to produce analytical ideas and knowledge, not aesthetic emotions. Many blind persons do not arrive, even in the fullness of their development, at the point of understanding the beauty of a face, a pose, while nevertheless they distinguish by touch one face from another and can tell the difference between two similar objects, one beautiful and the other ugly, noting accurately the characteristic differences. Pietro Landriani says that "touch understands a straight or crooked nose, a rough skin, but not beauty." A Miss del Cairo even wrote to him that for her a beautiful person, a beautiful building have no meaning, because touch cannot give an impression of the beautiful. (1)

AE~~STHETIC~~ APPRECIATION IS NOT A SPONTANEOUS GIFT; WHEN COGNITIVE CURIOSITY IS SATISFIED, THE LUXURY OF PREFERENCE BEGINS.

Aesthetic appreciation too is educated by exercise and comparison. In the same way many sighted persons, although they can distinguish very well real or pictured faces, do not understand painting and visual aesthetics. If they call a person or an object beautiful, they simply express with this word a judgment of practical character, utilitarian, or so to speak, sensuous.

Even among cultivated people it is not rare to meet persons of fine taste for painting and the plastic arts and none for music, or vice versa, or indeed a still stranger thing, persons sensitive to

(1) See The Education of the Blind, by Giulia Vignali, Chapter II. Florence, Civelli, 1902.

poetry and insensitive to the art of sound. These anomalies are explained just by the lack of wise education, that is, when the spontaneous propensity has been slight and teachers have neglected to stimulate it, before the mind finds its way toward the enjoyments in which it has learned to find satisfaction.

In this state ^{are} those born blind, or who have become so, in regard to the beauty of forms and motion. Teachers do everything to stupify in those who have it this embryonic taste, taking for model those who show no indication of it and calling the resistance of those who declare they experience something of this kind of beauty illusions and silly desires.

The hand not yet sated with touching to differentiate and to learn can certainly not give aesthetic sensations, and the blind have touched too little in their school up to the present time. But when the cognitive curiosity is satisfied, the luxury of preference begins.

Soft, smooth, tepid, porous, resistant, are the most elementary enjoyments. Then come their combinations and contrasts, until one advances to the appreciation of proportions, the elements of geometry, symmetry, ornamental accessories, comparison with the type for which one longs in mind. The static and analytic sensations of touch quickly give place to those muscular and synthetic images. The blind person no longer grasps, but touches lightly, acquiring a rapid perception of the elements that interest him, using simultaneously all the fingers and parts of both hands. He takes notice besides of the successive movements of the arms and person, made in a way that is rhythmic and calculated, using for guidance the general contours of

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the object, now known, and the demands of which, so to speak, he knows to be perceived as they ought to be. If perception ^{con}responds to expectation, some novelty is given which makes the idea of it more pleasing, some detail which does not confuse but arouses pleasing associations and makes the object attractive for something more than its practical qualities, hence arises tactile and muscular beauty. This ^{is} doubtless poorer than that of colors but for that reason it has more need of being cultivated.

If a blind man has not observed a face in the act of laughing, meditating, being angry, he will not be able at all to understand the expressions of speech and the descriptions of passions read in the face. But if he is trained to observe these modifications with a cognitive aim, he will enjoy little by little also the beauty of the face which reflects the mind more faithfully than another face. Hearing too, suitably trained to associate itself with these more material and less frequently controllable data - since one cannot put his hands upon persons and objects except in rare cases - substitutes in a certain way for sight, broadening syntheses remarkably and arousing tactile and muscular recollections in the interpretation of voices and resonance.

To explain better:- a laughing voice or even the slight sound of the breath of a person who smiles arouses in me a warm and vivid plastic image of the mouth and throat in the proper position of a smile. (1) My imagination enriches the auditory perception with

(1) The writings of Helen Keller are authoritative testimony of the richness of aesthetic impressions which a person without sight and hearing is still able to enjoy, provided he has warmth of heart and senses properly trained. I refer to one example among many which might be selected. "Mention a rose too far away for me to smell it. Straightway a scent steals into my nostril, a form presses against my palm in all its dilating softness, with rounded petals, slightly curled edges, curving stem, leaves drooping." The World I Live in, page 111.

images which if not always definite and corresponding to reality are nevertheless strongly tonic and help to strengthen also the very remembrance of the voice. I have been able moreover to observe in sufficiently frequent cases that my auditory inductions collect some real and characteristic ^{quality} ~~nature~~ of faces. And this should not be surprising, since logically a relationship ought to exist between voice and physiognomy, since the voice is characterized by the general conformation of the face and person. And if the blind could establish sufficiently numerous comparisons, touching and having described to them for a long period all faces, such approximations ought to be much less inexact and indistinct.

The voice of a person with a short thick neck, that of one with a broad nose, with a beard and heavy moustache are almost infallibly recognizable, except in cases of similar effects produced by different causes, as for example that of a person who has a slightly toneless voice through defect of the trachea, or through the deadening of the sound by the softness of the beard.

Many, even among the blind, think that these statements are exaggerated, and I must say that the lack of experiments made up to the present time obliges us to proceed very cautiously, above all to avoid the danger of being disturbed by the curiosity of the indiscreet and of confirming an additional prejudice against us in regard to certain of our remarkable and exceptional actual qualities, while these are not to be realized except by a wearisome process, by dint of exercise and in proportions always very limited.

The difference between myself and many other teachers ~~exists~~ lies in this, that they believe they should ~~always~~ disregard the small resources, considering that these are not worthy the trouble

and that they may be the cause of useless waste, vain illusions, to the loss of qualities that can more certainly be used.

As we have seen, these teachers are in haste to have the blind person specialize in this trade or that profession which will give him a living. I have in view, on the contrary, the more complete reparation of misfortune, with the certainty that this greater richness of imaginative and spiritual elements, by producing a man more like others, will give him also the best weapons for a career and for the competition of life.

It may also be observed that even when hearing joins the discrimination of forms, we are not yet in the aesthetic field. It is certain that the sympathy of the blind for the persons whom they call beautiful and ugly is not always in relation with the beauty or ugliness of their faces. At any rate, if it were only to understand better the speech of the sighted, it is necessary that we should be enabled as much as possible to describe precisely the content of our auditory images with the plastic elements corresponding to or connected with them. Sight too is trained to know the three dimensions by means of the comparison of its data with those of touch and of all the other senses. Children and those who see for the first time are the proof of this. Their eye would see only light and darkness. It is equally true that it can be deceived by painting in seeing objects where there are only colors.

It is certainly training which cannot be spontaneous, since the blind ~~xxx~~ man lacks the stimuli and the conditions, as he lives in a society of persons who possess sight and moreover the inferiority of acoustics to optics is incomparable. We should have no illusions as to the range of the distinguishing of forms by means of hearing ^{and} the

consequent aesthetic sensibility, which if I did not fear to be misunderstood I should define as plastic-auditory beauty or harmony.

A certain degree of discrimination and aesthetic impression of forms by means of hearing can be found also spontaneously in the semi-blind and even the nearsighted. The faint, twilight sensations, so to speak, of sight accustom these people to lend greater attention to those secondary sensations of hearing. Beauty results thus from a mixed harmony of colors and sounds. In a temple they will be impressed by the light ~~in~~ which pours through the windows and the echoing of the arches, the apses, the chapels. If I had not had a remnant of sight, perhaps I should have lacked the incentive to interest myself in these impressions. But my remnant quickly diminished, to the point that I often do not distinguish whether a room is lighted or dark, yet my trained hearing not infrequently gives me keen sensations and impressions not only of the size but also of the beauty of a room, a porch, a temple.

In a vague way, I have always experienced this aesthetic sensation, but I ~~have~~ never thought that I could have something in common or analogous with that of the sighted. Almost all the blind have their preferences for places and persons and naturally call what pleases them beautiful, without giving a thought to the why or how. It was a friend of mine, entirely blind, it should be noted, but who had had sight until the age of five, who made me reflect on this, Giovanni Suffriti, a piano tuner, not a man of much culture, but of fine open and sensitive mind.

Passing through the streets of Bologna at night when no noise

or preoccupation disturbed him, he often stopped to listen in ecstasy to the beauty of an arch, the harmonious arrangement of a square, the grace of a portico like that of the Servi, with its slender columns hardly perceptible as one walks along, and those of the Barracano under which one walks as if it were a tent hardly denser than the air. Often I went for a walk with him holding long philosophical discussions, on which he was very keen. Sometimes he would stop me brusquely. "Notice how beautiful this is!" And he would begin to beat his feet and his stick changing the point - how shall I express it? - of hearing.

Put on my guard, I began to have explained to me the architectural lines of the buildings which pleased me, associating my direct sensations with the descriptions of sight. And the indistinctness of my impressions thus found repose and consistency in the explanations of others. Then my enjoyment became more intense and my recollections were more fixed.

The indefiniteness of a sensation results from its not being able to find a place in a synthesis, and the synthesis is the principal coefficient of the aesthetic impression. As long as sounds are only sounds without coming together in the imagination with images of another kind, inspiration and musical enjoyment itself will be vague, and I cannot find the right expression - more sensual than ideal. In the same way a painting that was only of shadows and ^{colors} ~~aspects~~ without representation of concrete forms would be poor in content.

For this very reason the Hebrews, who were forbidden to

represent the divinity and ideal concepts in human forms, finally lost interest in painting and whatever embryonic genius which must have been in their race became atrophied.

"Suggestion," many sighted persons will say, meditating on the incredibly ~~expreme~~ poverty of this kind of aesthetics in comparison with that most splendid one of light. I myself, who have a remnant of sight and perfectly sound hearing, can testify that a ray of light which filters through a window pane animates me more than a temple with the echoes of the organ high in its vaults. "Suggestion," some blind persons will also say. But human nature is one, and so much the more should we train ourselves to take advantage of trifles, as it cannot be believed that there is any other way to develop imagination and form ideas rich in concreteness and power.

As the divine poet in his ascent toward heaven could not avoid passing through any ledge of purgatory,^{al} though he suffered more of less in each one, according as there was more of less in him of that sin to be purged, so a man is not ~~altogether~~ a man, ~~nor~~ nor can he raise himself toward the most spiritual forms and joys of intellectual light if he has not at least divined the world, the appearance of which delights his fellows, to which, at least through atavistic tendencies, he has in his heart some response which desires in some way to be revealed and celebrated in consciousness.

EXPEDIENTS FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION

I have now made clear, as I hope, the significance and purpose which the aesthetic education of the blind has for me, that is to make their syntheses broader and as concrete as possible,

represent the division of the country into three parts, the first of which is the most fertile and the most populous, the second is the most fertile and the most populous, the third is the most fertile and the most populous.

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THE DIVISION OF THE COUNTRY

The division of the country into three parts, the first of which is the most fertile and the most populous, the second is the most fertile and the most populous, the third is the most fertile and the most populous.

in order that from the adequacy and vivacity of these may be born a spiritual enjoyment, animating the imagination and initiative. Here are some examples of the means used in my school.

First of all, exercises of building and drawing develop naturally observation and taste for order, ^{proportion} variety and unity in variety. I have already spoken of the drawing of animals in various positions and I now add that we made much use of reproduction of statues and also of those small plaster figures which are sold by the Lucca ^{pedlars} ~~figures~~ at a ~~good~~ low price. We explained their poses and asked the pupils to imitate them with gestures and person. ~~An~~ awkward gesture ~~always~~ almost always corresponds to an uncomfortable and disagreeable muscular sensation, since it implies excess or defect or false direction of movements in relation to the aim determined beforehand.

When the blind child then has been trained to observe attitudes of the face and person in those who see and to control his own, it becomes natural to him to imitate them and to set up a comparison between his own and those of others. Thus also ceases that painful immobility which many blind persons retain even when their talk becomes animated. They become accustomed to turn their head toward those with whom they are talking, to point out with the hand the places and objects of which they are speaking. Note that the eye reflects the movements of the mind, because thinking is an initial act and physiologists are daily ascertaining more and more that only in so far as impressions and sensations affect our motor activity do they become our own. Someone has observed that from the habit of listening some blind persons move their ears, renewing in a slight degree those movements which are shown in the ears of horses and other animals and which in man are atrophied.

It is not necessary to make the blind man clumsy, teaching him a conventional gesticulation, but to accustom him to put vigorously into his hands, face, in a word, all the interesting parts of his person, movements corresponding to the things which he says or thinks, that is, to animate his imagination and expression. These things seem strange and difficult, but consider that they occur, more or less noticed, in everyone, and the eye, the most mobile and delicate organ, is the clearest testimony of this. Now these imperceptible movements of every other part of our body, inseparable from thought, although almost always unnoticed, can fall little by little under the observation and control of consciousness and so be moderated, accentuated, coordinated with training.

To exercise the pupils in gesture we invented one game among others called "the deaf man," or "the English lady." A teacher made believe to be a foreigner or deaf and speaking in monosyllables and verbs in the infinitive, she asked the pupils the street to go to one place or another. The pupil of course was obliged to explain by gestures, since the inquirer did not hear or did not understand Italian. The paths in the neighborhood of the institution and the streets of Rome, which they could already represent in diagram, now had to be indicated merely by gestures, and they had to exert themselves to find a way of being understood.

Another game good for transferring into the movements of the person those tactile movements of perception of figures and designs was to take each other by the hand and arrange themselves in such a way as to form successively the letters of a word, like the Pilignite iustitiam qui iudicatis terram, which the bright spirits formed before Dante in the heaven of Jupiter. When the girls had formed a letter,

they stopped a little, each one making her own voice heard, first one by one, then all in chorus with a musical chord, thus to give and receive an auditory sensation of the whole through every varying form of the group. It also delighted them to hear one or another as she moved, singing, so as to describe circles and other figures, almost as if the wake of a ship were making sounds.

We called these representations pictures and acoustic reliefs, and since the girls took much interest in them, I thought of making greater use of them.

The game of the city consisted in giving each pupil of a group the name of a city, then asking them to take in relation to each other the positions that the various cities have on the map. The distances were little by little made greater until we used the terrace situated above the long passageway which joins the **Casale** with the chapel and divides the garden of the cross from the girls' walk. The terrace represented the watershed of the Appenines, so that the garden of the cross was the Mediterranean slope and the girls' walk the Adriatic. A walk made across the passageway like a tunnel permitted crossing from one slope to the other. In turn then the pupils transformed themselves from cities into trains which made the trip up and down and across the peninsula. The cleverest ones climbed as a reward to the terrace to enjoy the auditory spectacle and judge together with the teachers if every city was in its place and if the trains followed the right route. Of course, cities and trains had to make their position known by their voice.

Those who did not yet know geography represented in a similar way the principal buildings and squares of Rome. And finally the smallest ones were trained to form the courtyard with the cistern in the middle and the surrounding doors and windows.

In regard to windows, to give a synchronous sensation of all those that opened on one façade, each window was animated by the voice of a person, while others stood in the courtyard at a suitable distance to be able to hear, almost in an acoustic perspective, the direction of each voice. This kind of game is good for producing very varied and pleasing acoustic effects if played with singing, various groupings, alternate changes and the different parts of a chorus, the voices placed at the windows of the different floors. Imagine something similar to the lights and hangings with which windows are decorated on holidays and think also of the suggestive effect of music in two or more choruses through the various direction of the sounds and echoes of each one.

After these and other similar exercises it will not cause surprise that our pupils, when taken to visit this or that architectural monument experienced special impressions of it and frequently showed a keen sense of preference and delight.

Easy observations which even you fortunate people who see the sun can test by merely applying a little attention to them are to distinguish by means of hearing between columns and pilasters. Columns are surrounded by the acoustic wave as by that of light, slowly, so to speak, and progressively. The sound shadow increases without suddenness from the tangent to the diameter, to decrease then from the diameter to the tangent with even gradation. Behind a pilaster, on the contrary, there is a sudden deadness. Such an impression may be had in quite a marked way if one walks along a portico or a nave where there ~~xxx~~ is on the side of the columns and pilasters the sound of a not very noisy fountain. For example, the colonnade of the Piazza di S. Pietro and the portico of the Psedra are enlivened by the sound of fountains. This sound is heard as one

walks along, now in full, now blended and extinguished gradually almost into silence, to be heard again in a crescendo gradually as it comes out of shadow. Then the sound invades the whole arcade and rebounds against the opposite wall, or insinuates itself, producing new echoes, into the halls and colonnades farther in. Then when one comes upon a pilaster, he recognizes it at once by the suddenly deadened wave, by the lack of shading between the soft and the loud, by the length of pauses and by a certain harshness produced by the angles of incidence of the wave on the sharp corners and flat surfaces. A similar impression is experienced walking on a road shaded by trees, especially when the foliage is thick and the murmuring of a fountain or a stream is near.

I thought that graded exercise and frequent attention ought to develop even more this kind of discrimination for practical and aesthetic purposes, and I made various tests to have the girls distinguish by bringing up to the ear cylinders, prisms, cones or pyramids of ^{gradually smaller} dimensions. ~~gradually smaller~~. These experiments, however, lasted too short a time to give results worthy of note. What can be verified is that in a good number of the cases and subjects the experiment succeeds. But it is very fatiguing, requiring great attention, when one is not content with spontaneous and occasional observations and wishes to make a systematic exercise.

I made a poor experiment with a wooden frame covered with cloth which could be placed in such a way as to form a more or less acute angle against two posts more or less distant. This kind of door without a top used to be placed as the boundary of the two camps in games of challenging. But the pupils detested it and

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 3, 1862. It is a very long letter, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the country at that time. It is a very important document, and it is one of the most interesting documents in the collection.

willingly made a mistake, running in a line so as to run into one of the two posts and throw down the whole thing. The chief cause of my failure, I think, was that the pretended wall of cloth produced a slight acoustic opacity ^{to be found} little or not at all ~~to be found~~ in an obstacle of wood and still less in one of stone. On the other hand to construct such equipment with heavy material would have cost too much and would have required machinery to change its shape.

With the intention of training hearing, I also made another experiment with little success. This was to give each pupil a small bell of different sound, decreasing by degrees the differences of tone and depth, then to ask them to recognize one another by the sound of each bell. But while more than one already distinguished the musical notes by ear, or indeed knew the step of her companions by the sound, they did not pay attention and made great mistakes in ~~fixed grades~~ these experiments, since "easy" and "difficult" are not fixed grades but depend on the interest and individual habits of each one.

On the other hand, a device which gave me in a short time the best results, to train the pupils to form exact ideas of beautiful and ugly plastic art was to interest them in the observation of the regular, with correct proportions, by means of contrast with the deformed, the ridiculous, ~~with~~ caricature. To touch a normal face interests a blind child little or not at all, and even when he touches it, he observes little or not at all the details which interest us. This also happens with children who have sight. The normal is not determined in consciousness except by contrast and the provocation of the abnormal. This explains the taste of children for the Pinocchios and every kind of puppet, all the more interesting for them the more abnormal they are for adults.

AS soon as we made a little girl touch a mask, she at once passed her hand over her own face to make the comparison. So she hastened to measure her ears if a puppet with donkey's ears was put into her hands. Likewise besides the sensation of beautiful and harmonious places it is useful to have them learn others, encumbered, confused and ill arranged. The same thing may be said about objects: - a vase badly turned, badly varnished, rough and heavy, of squat and irregular form, will make them appreciate the beauty of another, slender in form and finished in detail. Teachers who do not wish to have children know the ill-~~formed~~^{formed} for fear of spoiling their taste, and who dream of making them always live among beautiful things and persons, may be right in theory, and let us even say, as a matter of principle, since children should be made to encounter the ill-formed, the ridiculous, the ugly, only enough to make them abhor these and hasten to the opposite.

What does harm, here as everywhere, is monotony, uniformity, even of things which taken one by one are very beautiful. We have seen that this danger is much more to be feared in the education of the blind. All energy takes life and is developed by contrast. When we have succeeded in shaking the blind from ~~the~~ indifference to forms and to the places in which they live, we shall be sure of having awakened in them a sense, it matters little whether or not it is like that of others, of the beautiful and ugly, plastic, tactile and muscular, and a sense of the acoustic and spatial.

FROM AESTHETICS TO VIRTUE

I have delayed perhaps with prolixity over these considerations

and observations, fearing that because of the novelty of the subject and the numerous prejudices in vogue the conclusions which I am now about to draw would not seem clear. It is necessary to interest the blind person in the beautiful and the ugly of material things, because such interest excites his desire to know, to make his ideas and representations exact, arousing the imagination and efficient activity. Aesthetics, however, ought not to be the goal of his satisfaction. It is necessary to make him feel, even through bitter verification, if necessary, that the aesthetics of action, not that of forms and movements, will be his field of satisfaction and glory. From art to science, from science to virtue. Obvious things, but let us not be under the illusion that by means of maxims and reflections the life of a blind man - whether of others I will not ask - can be raised to this height. He has the need that others have too, to guide himself in the humblest contingencies, he has need of what will help him to distract his mind, in order not to go mad, in the immensity of his empty spiritual horizon, in the disproportion between his thought and knowledge.

We ought to accustom ourselves to find in virtue that amiable and serene aspect which in the Greek conception made the beautiful and the good inseparable.

"And even as through feeling more delight in doing good a man from day to day becomes aware that his virtue is advancing" (Paradiso, XVIII. 58 - 60). In this delight should consist our food to rekindle our faith from strength to strength or to attract by our serenity the sympathy and help of the sighted which is indispensable to us.

One might say that nature, in whose economy nothing is superfluous, has willed that some should be blind to put them at the outposts of spiritual ascent. Eighteen years ago, I wrote in my Introduction, "For other men to be good is a duty, for us it is a necessity, under pain of being intolerably unhappy." (1) When once the beauty of generosity, constancy, sacrifice have been tasted we can have neither time nor reason to sorrow over the deprivation of sight. And in the hours of weakness and of hardest testing, when the maxims of philosophy and even those of faith become dark, there remains to protect us from falling the horror conceived for the ugliness of evil, of error, of degradation.

There are other times, however, in which we are not tempted, but are weary. The spirit refuses to rise, yet has no desire to be lowered. Such times are naturally most frequent in persons forced to make much greater efforts, to bend their senses to unaccustomed substitutions, and their activity to adapt itself to the cooperation of others. Then is felt all the importance of aesthetic education, even if it is embryonic and inferior, which makes us enjoy the harmony of material forms. In certain moments even music and poetry are too exquisite, too exalted. Then if they are only the crumbs from your table, you who possess sight, do not forbid us to pick them up. We will touch lightly with our hands the contours of a beautiful statue, or lend our ears to the echoes of a temple, or

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(1) Even before me Mademoiselle Trifeau (blind) had observed in an article of the Valentin Hany periodical that it is in moral qualities that the word "beautiful" has its fascination for us."

caress the laughing face of a child. These delights, even in all their incompleteness, will make us reascend with desire to the others, not granted to us more sparingly through however harsh a conquest.

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 1914-1915

Note:- for convenience of the reader, since some things said in this report have already been treated in detail, while there are several statements which now can be given without need of explanation, I will promptly indicate the subjects so that those which epitomize things already said can be omitted by anyone who so desires. I have not thought best to reproduce the report to the Director General of Primary Instruction, which is spoken of in this report, since it contains statements and discussions already treated in this volume, besides details of expenses and estimates which would be out of place here.

To Senator Duke ~~Torlonia~~ Leopoldo Torlonia, President of the Margherita of Savoy Hospice for the Blind.

EXCEPTIONALLY GRAVE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE THIRD YEAR OF THE
SCHOOL IS DEVELOPING

Excellency,

The third year of my work in this institution has developed amid exceptionally grave and complex circumstances. The long and painful illness of the Reverend Sister Giacinta Traglia, who for fifteen years devoted herself with zeal and love as Superior of the hospice, was followed by her death on August 10th. Before this the disaster of the Marsicano earthquake had for various reasons kept away some sisters of our institution, reducing the already small personnel. There followed the scourge of war, which besides the economic and moral disturbance produced in all, brought three special disadvantages to the development of our school. Your Excellency, much occupied by the cares of the Red Cross, could not make frequent visits, which always give great incentive and a harmonizing influence.

Also the visits of the Queen Mother, the value of which is always of the highest importance, have been lacking. They represent at once the stimulus and reward of the whole community. Moreover the examinations in the public schools were advanced a month, to the great injury of pupils coming from private schools. Many of them could not present themselves and the others in great haste trusted rather to exceptional indulgence than to their preparation and were obliged to continue their studies during the summer months.

EXAMINATIONS AND VACATIONS OF PUPILS IN THE ELEMENTARY COURSE

This was not the year to take vacations and our state of mind would not have consented to it. The eight pupils who attended the third elementary class took the examinations at the public school in the month of June with good results and while giving the greater part of their time to manual work and the exercises of physical education, never entirely left off study. The same thing is true of the little girls who took the examinations and were promoted from the first to the second elementary class.

CHOICE OF THE CLASSICAL COURSE FOR THE PUPILS WHO PASSED THE

FINAL EXAMINATION

More laborious still was the task of the older pupils. They had passed the final examinations in July 1914 and with the new school year began the course in the lower classical school. I preferred this kind of study to the fifth elementary class or to the complementary and technical courses, guided by the conviction that classical culture is the only one to have an effective influence on spirit and character. Even when one cannot advance beyond the first course of the classical school, classical culture is in its nature organic, cooperating in the formation of good taste, judgment and initiative, while the technical

and complementary course give only a medley of superficial knowledge committed to memory. The fifth and sixth elementary classes are a hybrid course which, at least as it has been conducted up to the present time, does not give good results. Another benefit of classical culture is that of opening all the roads by which eventually one is brought to a higher culture.

Four pupils have begun the classical course with much good will and through assiduous care on my part and that of Miss Flena Coletta, who from the beginning assisted me with great enthusiasm and efficiency in this new method of education. The pupils have been able to complete in one year the program of the first two courses. Since the date of the examinations in the public schools was set a month earlier than usual, it did not seem wise to present them, especially as there will be a special session next February for the candidates presented for the first time at the October session.

THEIR IMPROVEMENT AND THE EXAMINATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE THIRD CLASS OF THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL

In the month of July, however, when the examinations would regularly have been held, the professors of the Royal Mamiani Classical School kindly consented to give an examination at our school with the same standards required of their own pupils. This examination served as a test and gave very satisfactory results, favorably impressing the teachers, who at the autumn session gave all four pupils regular admission to the third class of the classical school. Naturally these pupils had to continue studying during the summer with rest for only one month.

GOVERNMENT INSPECTIONS AT THE SCHOOL AND NEW SUBSIDIES

During the past school year 1914-15 our school had three government inspections, all of which brought important benefits. The first was

on September 7, 1914, by Commendatore Crivellari, Inspector of the Ministry of the Interior, as a result of whose excellent recommendations as well as the authoritative personal interest of Your Excellency, the Ministry of the Interior granted an extraordinary subsidy for the development of the school, besides renewing the usual subsidy of 5,250 lire, pledging it with flattering promises.

In my letter of October 8, 1914, I asked Commendatore Camillo Corradini, Director General of Primary and Popular Instruction, for his powerful interest in regard especially to the proposal of the Administration to prepare, by means of my modest work, teachers specialized in a rational method of education of the blind, so that this method may spread to the other institutions. We have already in Italy numerous special governmental courses for kindergartens and two normal schools for training teachers of deaf mutes, while for the blind everything is left to empiricism and the kindheartedness of private individuals. The Ministry of Primary Instruction ordered Cavaliere Giovanni D'Andrea to visit our school with care and report on the subject. The result of the inspection was the assignment of 2,700 lire to create two fellowships for study for two young persons with diplomas that they may devote themselves to apprenticeship and at the same time give regular instruction in our school under my direction by way of experiment during the school year lately finished.

The third inspection took place on July 20, 1915, by order of the Ministry of Public Instruction and was made by the same Royal Inspector Cavaliere D'Andrea. This inspection together with the report of teaching sent by me to the Director General of Primary Instruction on July 24, 1915, has had the happy result, which I recently learned officially, that the Ministry has decreed, as proof of its satisfaction and encouragement, the renewal of the subsidy for the year 1915-16,

raising it from 2,700 ~~lire~~ to 3,500 lire, to realize the increase proposed in my report and confirmed by the Inspector.

I have the honor to send you a copy of my report to the Ministry of Public Instruction, in which you will find explained at length the teaching results of my work and that of the apprentice teachers during the past year. I think it suitable to incorporate this report, which is strictly about the teaching in general, with some information and considerations which it is my duty to communicate to you and the Council and which I am sure you will receive with your usual kind interest.

TWO PUPILS OVER SCHOOL AGE RECEIVED AT THE INSTITUTION

On November 11, 1914, by order of Your Excellency, Maria Scorsone-elli, a young girl of fourteen, was received as a pupil at the hospice. Pupils who enter when over school age always cause extraordinary disturbances in an institution, to such an extent that the majority of schools refuse to ^{accept} ~~receive~~ them. This is the case, as always, of summum ius summa iniuria. These pupils cause a great deal of work and thought, but frequently they give excellent results, so that it would be cruel to exclude them.

I had opportunity to know Maria Scorsone-elli in the spring of 1914. I experienced indescribable sorrow on finding myself in the presence of a girl full of energy and will forced to ignorance and inactivity through the discouragement and despairing pity of her parents. I had ~~her~~ entrusted at once to an intelligent teacher instructed by me in a short time how to teach her our system of reading and writing. The girl made such rapid progress as to take in three months the examinations for promotion from the third to the fourth elementary class. The opening of the possibility for her to be educated with her brothers was

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a birth from death to life for her. Naturally she was able to profit from these rapid results, from her maturity of judgment and the empirical instruction that came from her age and her family, as she was the daughter of a professor. When she entered our institution, she would have had to go into the fourth elementary class. We had one group of children in the third and another of those who were beginning the classical school. It would have been necessary to employ a teacher expressly for Maria Scorsionelli, which was impossible. To make her repeat the third class with our children, who were much younger and inferior in intelligence and feeling, would have demoralized her. I tried putting her at the foot of the classical school students, merely helping her with supplementary lessons. This was possible thanks to the zeal and generous help of Miss Coletta, but satisfaction crowned the effort. Maria Scarsionelli took her final examinations at the July session with excellent results and at the autumn session was presented at the examinations for admission to the third class of the classical school together with four companions. The step was undoubtedly too long, and we made her enter the contest not from confidence in complete success, but to make her win approbation in some test, since she retained the right to the February session. Thus it happened that although she did not pass, she made a good impression, giving complete confidence of passing at the second session and of catching up with her companions within the next year. Her example of power therefore deserves special praise.

The condition of Maria Mellano, who entered the hospice a few days ago on the recommendation of Queen Helena, is similar. She seems very good and promising in character but has not the resources of education of a well born family. We will not fail to do everything possible,

aside from reasons of charity, out of regard and respect for her August Protector. To conclude this subject, permit me to recommend that, while not excluding in principle the acceptance of pupils over age, who are often the most pitiful cases, preference be given the youngest as those who give the greatest profit with the least disturbance to the conduct of the institution.

ADVANTAGES OF STARTING THE BOYS' DEPARTMENT SOON

With reference to this matter, I cannot fail to insist on starting the department for boys as soon as possible. Consider, Excellency, how difficult the problem of education for girls is in general. We are under the obligation to have a model school for the other institutions and we have only girls. If we succeed, the result will impress even the most incredulous, but it is an undeniable fact that boys give quicker and more notable results. Every day I make the comparison between the little girls of our institution and a little blind boy received a few months ago in my home, although very weak in health and arrested in development. He is the Della Marsica boy recommended by Her Majesty the Queen Mother, who could not be received at the hospice just for the lack of a boys' department. The chief compensation for blindness should be found in personal initiative and boys always have more of this.

PROPOSAL TO ADMIT A BLIND BOY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TO ATTEND THE FOURTH CLASS WITH OUR PUPILS

While waiting then for the much desired boys' department, I will ask you to receive this year as a regular day pupil, a little boy, Achille Ferri, who has already been attending the institution for two years once or twice a week, and is of such excellent character as not to cause fear of any disadvantage. This child,

prepared at first in my home, has attended during the past two years the second and third elementary classes with sighted children. After school he came to my house and I often took him to the institution. It was an experiment which I wished to try in agreement with my friend Professor Caselli, Director of the Goffredo Mameli Public School, although I was not under illusions as to the result, which has already failed in England, where it has been tried on a large scale, and elsewhere. Although ~~that~~ Ferri is very willing and fairly intelligent, at the elementary public school he did little the first year and nothing the second, passing only because of pity. This year there would be the opportunity for him to go into the fourth class with the second group of our pupils. He could be brought in the morning and taken home again in the evening by his parents, who are most desirous of having him taught. During recreation he could be entrusted to the teacher and to the faithful and excellent Pasqualina. He could take his midday meal at a separate table in the common refectory. Without at present making it a question of principle, since certainly the mixed school of boys and girls, especially of the blind, is not without disadvantages, I feel able in conscience to assume all the responsibility for this special case, and for this year, and I think I ought to recommend it warmly to your approbation and that of the Council, since it is the only arrangement possible for teaching this child, who is very promising and of a humble but honest family. Next year, after a course well done at our school, he will be able to attend regularly the secondary public school, which I believe it is suitable to have the blind do in common with others, though I do not think so for the elementary school.

ADVANTAGE OF SENDING THREE PUPILS TO THE PUBLIC CLASSICAL SCHOOL

There come into the same plan the measures to be taken for the pupils who have gained admission to the third class of the classical school. This year it has been possible to prepare them at the institution by the help of Miss Coletta, who has devoted many hours a day to them, and by my setting aside other duties no less important. Another year this would not be possible, partly because the third class requires more teaching more accurately given, partly because Miss Coletta will not be able to give her time any longer, finally because if I continue to act as classical professor, though I do not dislike the work, I shall not have time to attend to the special duties of directing the school and the method for which the school itself was founded. I have said nothing about this strictly internal detail in the report to the Ministry which I enclose. Yet it is true that I have not been able to take care of the preparation of the apprentice teachers entrusted to me, just because I had to give too much time to the classical school students. Since at last we have the tramway line from the Madonna del Riposo to St. Peter's, and also since the road from the Madonna del Riposo to the hospice has been much improved, the hospice is no more difficult of access than it would be for many people if it were within the walls of Rome. We are also fortunate in having here in Rome a girls' classical school with a single and convenient schedule of hours and teachers of good standing.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE USEFULNESS OF HAVING THE BLIND COMPLETE THEIR STUDIES WITH THE SIGHTED

More than the opportunity for culture, moral reasons urge me to advise this measure. Our aim is to prepare the blind for life, and no field is more adapted to this than the public school, all the more

that a community like ours, formed of poor inmates and segregated, does not at all offer the variety of intimate life. The lack of sight takes away innumerable distractions, leaving the imagination much poorer and duller. The consequence of this is the very grave disadvantage that is verified in all our institutions; the exuberance of youth, for lack of nourishment from the outside world, is either turned back into itself and becomes corrupted or is wasted. This defect is the chief one to be deplored even at the Margherita Hospice, notwithstanding my efforts and those of the excellent persons who have helped me, as well as the broad minded disposition of the Council. You with a glance enrich your mind with more numerous elements of knowledge and action than a blind person can do in many hours of ^{observation} ~~concentration~~ and study. Children who see must be recalled to attention and concentration. The art of educating the blind consists in the opposite. It is necessary to put them continually to the test with always new and graded difficulties to draw them out of their isolation and vain concentration. Nothing is more useful to this end than putting blind children into contact and emulation with sighted ones by means of the public school. This is done already in almost all schools in foreign countries and, to mention institutions of our own, at Bologna, Florence, Turin, Naples, Lecce, not only for boys but also for girls.

I think it proper to repeat that to my mind instruction is not an end but a means. The blind person must compensate for the lack of sight with culture, and a classical school diploma, far from making him vain and presume on his rights, ought to represent for him the common elementary culture. The question of morals and character is so definitely ^{my} ~~the~~ highest purpose that of our four pupils I would

plan to send only three to the public school, keeping the cleverest one away, just because her character is not sufficiently formed. This girl will be able to go on studying privately to present herself at the examinations. In this way her steadiness will be put to the test and her moral training will benefit. In order not to mortify her before the community her exclusion will be justified on the ground that this year she ought to attend special exercises of orthopedic gymnastics in order, if possible, to straighten her spine.

ORTHOPEDIC GYMNASTICS AND MEDICAL HELP

The introduction of orthopedic gymnastics is another of the benefits gained this year by our school. We ^{owe} ~~are~~ this benefit to the help and advice of the distinguished Professor Serena, orthopedist in the public schools of Rome. Through lack of exercise and neglect in which the blind are often left in their early years, many of them become bent and remain weak and undeveloped.

After the introduction of vigorous physical education in the institutions for the English blind, the percentage of defective pupils dropped from thirty-three or thirty-six to six or seven. Among our eighteen pupils perhaps a third join to the misfortune of blindness other physical and psychic deficiencies. I am grateful to have obtained also the very valuable cooperation of Professor Sante De Santis to aid in their cure.

THE ASSISTING PERSONNEL

What we unfortunately still lack is an adequate assisting personnel and a place to separate the pupils completely from the other inmates. The good sisters, devoid of the necessary pedagogical training, often take sharp issue with faults which should on the contrary be cured with much caution and patience. At other times they allow themselves

to be overcome by pity and the tendency to give long lectures where few words and firmness are needed. I forbear to speak of the harmful and yet inevitable interference and intolerable behavior of the inmates. To provide against these disadvantages I trust that the Council will as soon as possible enlarge the buildings for the complete separation of the various units. The assurances given me by the General House of the Reverend Sisters encourages me to hope that the new Superior selected with standards favorable to my system of education will bring me that strong help which comes only from intimate and spontaneous agreement of conviction and culture.

GARDENING

For lack of means and other small obstacles of the rule of the hospice, cultivating gardens by the pupils was stopped at the ^{outset.} ~~beginning~~ It is a very useful and healthful exercise, already practised very widely in foreign countries and so pleasing to the Queen Mother that she has several times sent the head gardener of her palace to offer his valuable training. I hope to be able to make use of this without further delay.

THE MUSIC SCHOOL

Another thing that should not be delayed is the organization of the music school. Up to the present time we have done as well as possible with the work of a sister educated in a taste and standards now outmoded and with the ~~help~~ of some of the former pupils. Her Majesty the Queen Mother has this branch too specially at heart. I have thought hitherto that the least evil would be for me to give it up, since art is something to be done well or not at all. It would be necessary then to form a less antiquated taste in our pupils by

the frequent hearing of good music. This would now be easy because of the improved transportation, by taking them to church services and concerts. A teacher also would be necessary, at least to give direction and correct mistakes, and finally the radical repairing of the pianos which we have and the acquisition of a new one.

THE PRINTING OFFICE AND TRAINING THE INMATES IN WORK

With the coming of the new Superior, if I have spontaneous and convinced cooperation from her, I hope to be able to make more effective and organic another part of my program, that is, the training of the adult inmates as much as possible in an occupation which will elevate them morally and materially. Something has already been done and it is only necessary to intensify and organize it. I have the satisfaction of announcing that the printing in Braille of the Divine Comedy is completed. Several copies have been sold and we have orders for many more. The expense of the edition will shortly be covered, although we have made the price very moderate out of respect to the August Donor of the machinery. The use of this machine has shown the need of various improvements. I hope the Council will approve the expense, which we will deduct from the profit of the sale. For my part ~~xxxxxxx~~ I have prepared the designs for the machine and will direct the work. I say this not as a mere wish but to show that general culture puts a man into better condition for understanding manual work. I have also the satisfaction of announcing that we have begun the manufacture of mats, using some old men, who are all very happy to spend their time in working. The old men could also be employed in various other kinds of productive work, but here again we must deplore the lack of space.

the diagram which we have and the acquisition of a new one. Attention was turned to the fact that the United States of America was not a member of the League of Nations. A request also would be necessary at least to the United States of America, by which time to secure services of the improved transportation. This would now be very different. The Government's location of road service. This would now be very different.

[illegible]

Excellency, these results, still very modest and inferior to the need, will give me immense satisfaction if they succeed in increasing your help and that of the Council. I have explained them at length because their value is ideal rather than practical, that is, they represent as yet not fruit but seed. We have cast them; to make them fruitful and multiply is in your power by obtaining for us the financial means and the no less effective moral encouragement of the Government and of public opinion, as well as by having the August Protector receive our devoted acknowledgement of her special kindness.

With greatest respect to you and the Council, allow me to remain,

Your most obedient,

Augusto Romagnoli.

Rome, October 31, 1915

accordingly, these people, will very much be interested in
 the case, will give an anxious attention to the subject in
 connection with your case and that of the woman. I have explained to
 at length because their value is great rather than practical, that is,
 they represent us not only in the past, but in the future; to
 make their faithful and faithful in in your case by stating for us
 the financial means and the to have effective moral movement
 of the government and of public opinion, as well as by having the
 agent to be able to give out devoted acknowledgment of the moral
 progress.

The present report to you and the woman, also as to the
 your most obedient,
 George Washington.

Rome, October 21, 1811

THE END OF THE SCHOOL AND THE REASON FOR THIS BOOK

The R/eport to the Directive Council for the school year 1914 - 15 was the last, although I continued the work until June 20, 1916, the day on which the course closed. The examinations were put off till the autumn, on the pretext that I needed to take an earlier vacation for reasons of health. To the Council, however, I made my resolution clear, with the motive of a much sadder necessity, that is, of putting an end to the discord between my standards of education and those of the sisters, which for some time had been intolerable. Nothing indeed is more serious than the lack of perfect accord, or at least of perfect discipline, among teachers.

The old superior, as I have said, from long habit loved the institution and the pupils, and although at her age not a little disturbed by the terrible innovations which I had brought, she understood intuitively that there must be a great deal of good in them, and had finally come to esteem me sincerely. Then I was able to take advantage even of the differences of opinion for the end which above all I had at heart, the character training of our pupils, persuading and inciting them at every opportunity to win pardon for their desire for exercise, knowledge, initiative, independence with good grace and by showing that study made them capable of understanding and sympathy. But the new Superior, entirely new to work for the blind, demanded detailed regulations which would fix in every particular her rights and duties and mine, on the basis of this formula: - to me, instruction, to the sisters, ^{education.} ~~training.~~

There can be no set of regulations which foresees all

the fact of your coming into the world was the only thing
 The subject is the Dismissal of the Holy Spirit
 1911 - It was the last, although I considered the year 1911
 June 20, 1911, the day on which the church began. The

examinations were put off till the autumn, on the ground that
 I needed to take an earlier vacation for reasons of health.
 To the Council, however, I made my vacation clear, with the
 motive of a more modest necessity, that is, of putting an end
 to the hindrance between my standards of education and those of
 the church, which for some time had been hindering. Nothing
 indeed is very serious when the lack of perfect health, or at
 least of perfect discipline, makes teachers.

The old minister, as I have said, from long habit loved the
 institution and the people, and although at her age not a little
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 our people, forwarding and insuring them at every opportunity to
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 independence when good sense led by showing that I was with them
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 entirely new in work for the church, however, detailed regulations
 which would be in every particular for their own better and
 mine, on the basis of this formula - to be, instruction, to
 the church, however.

There can be no act of remission which involves all

the interferences of these two activities, and whenever we desired to make one, it gave rise to interminable contests of interpretation of every article.

When the strife of standards and methods became too sharp, I was assured that the Administration, although regretful, did not know how to decide, desiring not to displease either the sisters or me. I therefore thought it my duty, however bitter for me, to relieve the Administration of embarrassment, withdrawing before those marvellous regulations were compiled.

Thus I left before the vacation. It happened soon after that I was called to direct the ^{Home} ~~House~~ for the Re-education of Military Blind at the Villa Aldobrandini. The Administration of the hospice, informed of my great and delicate task, wished also to contribute to the glorious invalids entrusted to my care, and in order that I might devote myself to them with perfect calm, granted me a leave of indefinite time.

Thus two years passed. In the meantime, the death of Senator Torlonia, the most enthusiastic supporter of my work, new and more serious financial difficulties, and the departure of most of the pupils made it no longer possible to think of regulations, but ~~the~~ to ^{hand in} ~~accept~~ my resignation.

This, in brief, is the story. To tell the details would be little or not at all instructive. It might have a pathetic interest, if I were a poet, and above all if I had not determined within myself not to afflict my neighbor with sad tales, unless it is absolutely necessary, as is not the case here. What Manzoni thought in regard to love stories ought perhaps for a stronger reason to apply to sad stories and verses: - "There is so much sorrow in life!"

the individuals of these two societies, and thereby to
designed to make use of individual efforts of
participation of every article.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1967

I was surprised that the administration, although extremely, did not know how to handle, especially not to distinguish either the interests of me. I therefore thought it my duty, however slight for me, to advise the administration of the government, although I have not any special knowledge or experience.

Time 2 will follow the same format.

2010 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

the following information:

by the question, informed of the state of the nation, and

in order that I might devote myself to them with greater calm.

Those two years passed.

most of the public work is no longer possible or likely to be restored, but the restoration of the public work is still possible.

is absolutely necessary, as is not the case here. After Warrant
which wasn't not so filled up with other things, before it
understand, if I were a party, and above all if I had not experienced

There is a great deal of interest in the study of the effects of the environment on the development of the individual. The study of the environment is a very broad field, and it is difficult to define it. However, it is generally accepted that the environment includes all the factors that influence the development of the individual, such as the physical environment, the social environment, and the cultural environment. The study of the environment is important because it helps us to understand the factors that influence the development of the individual, and it helps us to identify the factors that can be manipulated to improve the development of the individual.

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I stayed with the military blind as long as they needed me, until the summer of 1920, when a movement of high moral worth and of well founded hopes began a new era for the Italian blind. Lieutenant Aurelio Nicolodi, blinded in the war, on return from re-education acquired by example and affectionate encouragement from every one of us, was deeply moved by the squalor in which the majority of the blind are still immersed through indifference or misunderstanding pity. And he gave his generous spirit, tempered by sacrifice, to the desire to emancipate all the blind from ignorance, inertia, frequently, alas, even from profiteering, as he had offered and sacrificed his youth to free his native Trentino from foreign oppression.

Aurelio Nicolodi made himself publicity man and organizer of a great association of all the blind of Italy, military and civil, great in idealism, in faith and solidarity, and a model in searching energetically for the most suitable means to break down the wall of prejudice which separates the blind from the joys of life and common work.

The Italian Union of the Blind was formed on the occasion of a congress at Genoa on October 26, 1920. A year later the society celebrated in Florence the first convention of the blind from every part of Italy. Carlo Del Croix opened it in Florence in the Salone dei Cinquecento with one of his noblest and loftiest speeches, "Night."

Partly from need of recovering my strength, abused for eight years by endless work under the irritation of obstacles and trials that were too great and too numerous, partly because I saw the movement

I shared with the majority blind as long as they needed me, until the summer of 1930, when a movement of high moral worth and well founded hope began a new era for the blind blind. I learned to be blind, blinded in the way, no longer from re-education as to example and systematic comparison; from every one of us, we deeply moved by the question in order the majority of the blind the will improved through intelligence or mismanagement. And he gave his wisdom freely, tempered by reality, to the desire to emancipate all the blind from ignorance, injustice, degradation, also, even from prostitution, as he had others and sacrificed his youth to free his native nation from foreign oppression.

Charles Goodrich gave himself physically and mentally to a great emancipation of all the blind of Italy, offering his life, even to himself, in truth and solidarity, and a model in reaching essentially for the most suitable means to free even the blind of justice with respect. The blind from the year of 1910 and common work.

The Italian Union of the blind was formed on the occasion of a congress at Rome on October 25, 1930. A year later the society existed in Florence and the first gathering of the blind from every part of Italy. Carlo del Gaudio opened it in Florence in the before and kinship with one of his models and leaders, Giuseppe, himself.

From that time of association of spirits, around the table years of struggle were under the direction of Giuseppe and others that were for years and two months, finally became a new movement.

now in good hands, I thought the time had come to return to my studies and to my chair in Lanciano, remaining in the Union of the Blind as a mere disciplined private soldier under these young men of generous aims and mature wisdom.

There reached me meantime ever sadder news of this one or that of my dear pupils, dear, without exaggeration as daughters to me and my wife, who had been the most tireless of their teachers. I could do no more than pray for them. To pray is not a vain labor; it is to do gentle violence to the Omnipotent with the faith that moves mountains, since if nothing is lost in the physical universe, no more can sincere and agonized heart throbs vanish away.

I was called from resting to give my contribution, collaborating with the commission convoked by Minister Gentile to study the educational problem of the blind. I had the consolation of ~~ascertaining~~ ^{establishing} as a fact that the legislative resolutions on extending the duty of instruction even to the blind were sanctioned by the very standards which I had modestly taught. I thought then that it would not be useless for me to tell my experiences, for a publisher to print them and for someone to read them.

THE END





